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TRUE PERFECTION ATTAINABLE

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THE
TRUE PERFECTION

WHICH GOD REQUIRES

ATTAINABLE ON EARTH.

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“BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT.”

1994-a'

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THE PROLOGUE.

ONE Sunday morning, my desire to know
How man may reach perfection here below,
Led me to take the Book, wherein is given
Instruction meet to fit the soul for Heaven,
To a familiar, oft-frequented, place,
Uninterrupted, there the truth to trace.
Pledged to this purpose, trifling thoughts retire,
While nature woos to thoughts, than nature,
higher.

The glorious sunshine, shimmering through the
trees

That bowed responsive to the varying breeze ;
The dew, that nature, all, with pearls bedecked,
Or changed to gems more lustre to reflect ;
The breath of flowers perfuming all the air,
Voicelessly telling of a Presence there ;
The hallowed calm upon that holy day,
All, gave to thought a trend the heavenward way.

To that retreat retired, all free from care,
No thought of my surroundings, light, or air,
Or wafted perfumes — while impressed by all ;
Perhaps by Him who waits the suppliant's call,
Wooring, enduring, with long-suffering love,

To make His children ripe for realms above : —
 There, to the book of Job I turned, to find
 How one may be more perfect than his kind.
 Wherein it was Job's chief perfection lay,
 I'd find out on the morning of that day.

“Not the whole book ! but a few chapters read,
 Will solve the problem,” — to myself, I said.
 For little more of Job was known to me,
 Than I had learned beside my mother's knee,
 Among the catechetical questions, when
 “What man was first ?” “Who died to save
 lost men ?”

“Who was the oldest ? — the most perfect man ?”
 The primer taught without much form or plan :
 Sufficient, if, from childhood up to youth,
 The mind had simply treasured gospel truth.

I read : was pleased to find how firm Job stood,
 Bereft, and in his seeming solitude.

Read on, — was disappointed ; but still read
 To the book's end ! then to myself, I said,
 “It is God's Book ; therefore, the truth must be :
 But Job, as perfect, fail my eyes to see.”

The trial did not seem like a success.

I did not know, was not inclined to guess.

Closing the Book my thoughts took other range,
 My disappointment vanished with the change.

Long time passed by, my patience had been
tried ; —

No thought herein, to rank with Job, implied : —
When, of a sudden, wonder came one day
Whether, within my province now, it lay
To solve the problem, that I found in youth
Concerning Job. Straight to the Book of truth
I bent my way ; there, studying all alone,
A helper came : “ *The Arena and the Throne.*” *
I read ; digested : till the boundary line
Was lost between the author’s thought and mine.
Hence, what herein shall with his thought accord,
To him be granted credit, and award
Of origin : and let myself be known
As but the echo, of a high, pure tone
Resounding here, destined to sound on high
When blending voices mingle in the sky.
Let but my echo be repeated then,
And Heaven receive the tribute with, “ Amen.”

Nor would I fail to note the light that gleamed
From him who wrote “ *Redeemer and Redeemed.*” †
He brought me from deep doubt, as from the dead :
Led me to Christ, the ever-living Head.

* *The Arena and the Throne*, by L. T. Townsend, D. D. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston.

† *Redeemer and Redeemed*, by Charles Beecher, Georgetown, Mass. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

Revealed the broken cisterns, insecure ;
Opened up Gospel truths, as fountain pure,
Refreshing, to th' hungering, thirsting soul,
Over whom dark clouds, as huge billows, roll :
Till my blind eyes beheld the peaceful light,
And knew my Father 'd sent to heal my sight : --
Sent, not an angel from the realm above,
But one on earth, who served for Jesus's love.

When who turn many, from crude error's way,
Shall shine resplendent in the coming day ;
Who feed Christ's lambs and make the Shepherd
 known,
Be called by Him to share the Victor's throne ;
May it be his in radiance to shine,
The joy to view that radiance, be mine.

Then shall my highest powers with all unite
To praise the God of honor, truth, and right,
For matchless love, that, suffering long, could wait
The lost ones to restore to their lost state :
And, from the conflict of the ages past,
Bring forth a concord evermore to last —
Ever in sweetest harmony to chime
When suns have paled, and no more measure time :
Unfolding ever with love's rich increase
In life eternal, joy, bliss, perfect peace.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I.

THE BOOK.

MAN, weeping, wakes into a vale of tears.
He seeks to solve the problem life appears.
Why here? and wherefore? What his destiny?
Where are the aids to solve the mystery?
Should he blot out the sun, to clear the sky,
Thinking the light he carries in his eye,
He may be led by spectres in his brain,
But has no light to make his pathway plain.
Who gave the sun, gave not all creatures eyes;
Not all crave light, nor native of the skies:
To earth adapted, they the dark earth crave,
Nor deem their home to higher life a grave.
To moral creatures, God gave power to choose—
To grope with bats, and higher life refuse;
To close their eyes, or lift them to the sky;

Seek life eternal, or, with gross things, die.
He, in His love and ministry to men,
Gave them a Book prepared with ink and pen :
Left nought undone the human race to teach,
And place the highest good within their reach :
To pilgrim strangers, journeying through life's
vale,
Employs the method that can best avail,
That they discern the truth He would unfold,
And in His light its beauty all behold :
Adapts the means to suit the age and race,
That they may truth receive, and "grace for
grace."

The Book God gave we simply Bible name,
But for that Book the highest reverence claim ;
Or, if the Book by divers names we call,
As Sacred Scriptures, Word of God — these all
Are only synonyms, the name to express
Of the one Book God gave our race to bless.
The Bible, though Divine, and by God given,
Was not composed, then dropped to earth, from
Heaven.

All was dependent on the human pen :
Though God inspired, the writers all were men ;
Wrote different books, at different points of time,

And each one's style, or more or less sublime,
Identifies the writer — plainly shows
That he is conscious what he writes, and knows
His theme; — not a mere medium, to pen
An unknown message to his fellow-men.
The scripts, at last, at different periods done,
Were all collected, bound complete in one:
One Holy Bible, destined as the seed
Whence untold volumes thenceforth should pro-
ceed.

A living miracle, ordained to be
Man's guide, through time, to immortality.
Grove they in darkness where this light is not;
Happy they are who have its truth inwrought.
Let none, then, seek to blot the Bible out,
To raise in sport, or help support, a doubt, —
Dishonest doubt, not raised to prove the truth,
But to unsettle unformed, wayward youth.
The Book is truth, — all honest test will bear,
Nor science can its radiance impair.
Will, with its light, give solace, peace, and rest,
And lead the illumined home to mansions blest.
Since a collection is the Bible, then
One Book must have been first revealed to men;
And that first book have been by God designed,

As lesson first, to instruct the human mind :
 Since He is Author, and Inspirer, too,
 With this prime object — this alone — in view.
 All comprehending what His children need,
 He will the first with the first lessons, feed.
 The basis first, whereon shall firmly stand
 Truth that shall follow as their powers expand.
 In any study, an important part
 Is that first principles be learned by heart.
 Their comprehension is a lasting gain,
 Making all future lessons much more plain ;
 Clears the perception, opes the mental eye,
 And lessens reference to the text gone by.
 Be it our object, then, at once to trace
 The truth first given to the human race.
 Diligent study gives us zeal to look
 For older script than that called *Pentateuch*.
 To find, of all we hold as sacred lore,
 Than Job, there is no book to stand before.
 Most ancient, earliest — Job. The statement
 stands
 Confirmed by one who confidence commands —
 A learned doctor,* commentator too,
 Who wisely studied all the Bible through.

*Dr. Scott.

“Some think it the most ancient work,” he writes,
“Now extant in the world.” And then he cites
Sufficient proofs his words to justify ;
Confirms, by simply telling how and why.
Religion patriarchal that remained,
In ordinances, that were then sustained,
In Uz. No record of idolatry
Except the chiefest emblems in the sky : —
The glorious sun ; the moon, queen of the night,
The only objects worship yet incite.
Allusion none to the Mosaic law,
Nor works of wonder that God’s people saw —
God’s chosen Israel, that He kindly blessed
And led from bondage to a land of rest.
The style of work and composition, too,
Sanction the opinion herein held to view.
I quote again — from knowledge not my own —
An extract in “Arena and the Throne,”
From Carlyle, who, with pen that ready flows,
Of Job has written poetry in prose.
Let me his words in measured lines rehearse,
To frame the metre of my truth in verse,
Though to preserve the accent and the rhyme,
I risk in language loss of the sublime.
“One of the grandest things e’er writ with pen,”

“A noble book,” belonging to all men.
Not written for one age, or time, or class,
'Tis “all-men’s book” — all, as the ages pass.
Our first and oldest statement of the *Why?* —
The problem never-ending, ne’er to die, —
“Man’s destiny, and God’s ways with him here
On earth.” When shall the visual ray be clear?
“Such living likenesses were ne’er seen drawn.”
Sorrow sublime! And who can look upon
A reconciliation more sublime,
Or match this record of so early time?
The oldest choral melody; — the heart,
As ’twere, of all mankind, bearing its part,
So soft, so great, as summer midnight bears;
A tone above the earth and all its cares;
Or as the world, with its accompaniment
Of murmuring seas, and stars, is yet content
To wheel its orbit throughout untold years,
And blend its chime with music of the spheres.
Such is the Book of Job, where we behold
That, although God chose Israel to unfold
The way He chose to govern men in time,
Nor less His government in realm sublime;
And chose they should His oracles possess,
Which, they transmitting, should all nations bless.

Yet, other nations were recipients, too,
Of truth Divine, not withheld from their view.
In Abraham's day — Israel's progenitor —
Approved of God, Job stood, in character.
Arabian Job! in crucible refined,
Heaven's host may God's ideal man-perfect, find.
This truth, transparent, all may clearly trace:
God is not partial to one given race;
Sees but one family in all the earth,
Prepared to ripen them for higher birth.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN.

HAVING discussed the Book of Job, we can
Turn our attention now to Job the *man* ;
Gather the truths that open to our view
Freely as flowers exhale the morning dew,
Diffuse their perfume, all refined, and give
To all who breathe, a better life to live.
Explore, as miners search beneath the soil
For treasure that repays both time and toil.
Job's individuality so scan,
That we may wisely mark the perfect man —
Intelligently know why he so shines
From earliest record to these present times ;
Why such distinction bears his name along :
Text for the preacher, subject for a song,
Pith for a proverb, and, by old and young,
A simile pronounced by every tongue.
At his first introduction, Job appears
A ripe adult, in character and years.
The days of helpless infancy are gone,

The joys and sorrows of young childhood's morn.

The happy halo, gilding early day,

Its beams has scattered — fleeting, passed away.

The season passed, of innocent delight,

When time moves slow and morn seems long ere
night;

The adolescent period, that anon o'ertakes,

And the fresh season when new love awakes:

The time attending in life's early dream,

When things that are, are not like what they
seem;

When pleasures, pastime, foibles, follies too,

Take on proportions that are not their due.

The season when young friendships form had
gone,

And Job had bid adieu to life's young morn.

But this life-school — with large experience
fraught,

A balanced mind, a manhood firm, had wrought;

A character developed and matured,

So even, so well-rounded, as insured

The admiration of the earth; and, more,

The approbation of high heaven, before

The assembled sons of God. But let us wait,

Or we the sequel shall anticipate.

While we, with zeal, refer now to the Book,
 May the same Spirit that inspired it, look
 Upon our effort, and inspire us too ;
 That nought therein disclosed escape our view.
 He, searching the deep things of God, make
 bright

Our vision, which, without His aid, is night.
 The narrative, in substance, opens thus : —
 “A man was living in the land of Uz
 Whose name was Job.” — No note of ancestors,
 Simple irrelevance may be the cause.
 A brief synopsis of his character
 Follows, confirmed by One who cannot err.
 Perfect, upright, feared God, evil eschewed.
 Simple to state, easily understood.
 Clear, plain, pellucid ; who shall dare deny
 God’s uttered truth ? or, face Him with a lie ?
 Question His balances or measuring rod,
 Whose ways are equal ? else God is not God.
 True, Job feared God, but not as Adam did,
 Who from His presence shrank and vainly hid,
 Or sought to hide. Job’s was a wholesome fear,
 Disposing him to wish God very near.
 But, as a mercenary man inquires, —
 Who to possession ardently aspires, —

Often and earnest, "Will it pay?" Desires
Of Job within himself arise, to light
Upon the path of honor, truth and right.
Assured that God approves, such way he'll take;
No powers combined can lead him to forsake
That course; if not, no power can make him
 swerve;
God is his friend; no other will he serve.
A well-trained conscience guides him in his
 choice,
And he will listen to its guiding voice.
He not alone the *path* of wrong forsakes,
The thought of evil banishes; thus takes
On habit, which, confirmed, makes impulse right
And the word *duty* dwindles out of sight.
Job, become perfect, has for his reward
The peace of him whose mind is stayed on God.
This character had Job attained, before
Responsible parental name he bore.
To this man, so described, seven sons were born,
While daughters three, his family adorn.
(Wise was the mother of Job's children, then
As proved by proverb* from the wise man's pen.
The woman building up her house is wise;

* Proverbs xiv. 1.

Who plucks it down, herself may well despise.)
The book perusing, we are led to see
Job's children all attain majority.
No note of childhood, passed in silence all,
What joys might cheer them, or what griefs
 befall;
How they were reared, — home-culture quite left
 out, —
They're not the theme the author writes about.
Yet doubt no shade casts whether Job ruled well
And peace and concord in his home did dwell.
The sequel shows, and makes it very clear
That well and wisely he the ten did rear.
He? *They.* Job's sons, if they were wisely led,
Parents were one — formed one united head:
Their aims, their ends, their motives intersphered.
More in narration, would have interfered
With the great end the Author had designed,
As lesson first, to instruct the human mind.

CHAPTER III.

HIS POSSESSIONS.

THE subject next upon the record shown,
Presents a schedule of what Job did own.
Possessions held in title, right, and fee,
Off-hand and round, with no pretense to be
Precise in numbers, as with coin we count,
Which will not, with the keeping more amount.
So numerous are his flocks and herds, that men
Make no account of less than ten times ten.
And, prospered as he was, one day's report
Would never with another day's comport.
The census of to-day would falsify
The numbering correct of yesterday.
That of to-morrow might still more outrun
The trusty counting that to-day had done.
First on the list to have and hold and keep,
We find enrolled, are seven thousand sheep.
(A list made out the present day might read —
"Same more or less;" of this there was no need.
Transferred estate no written deed required,

Nor registration yet had man desired.)
But flocks and herds were doubtless many more,
Had count been accurate, and told each score.
Three thousand camels next, number immense!
A host of men to act in their defense
As consequence, would seem to be required,
And large provision for the herdsmen hired.
Ten thousand animals; nor are these all;
Five hundred yoke of oxen answer call.
These well might stock a farm. But we proceed
And, mules five hundred on the schedule read;
That is, five hundred mules of female kind;
Mules masculine not reckoned, as we find.
We are prepared, with such a large estate,
To read, Job had a household very great.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS RESOURCES

His family of ten, Job reared without the aid
Of any book. No book had yet been made:
Nor magazine, nor pamphlet; Bible none;
To give his word a deeper, stronger tone,
Sanction authority, and be his guide,
His standard, which all questions should decide.
Not any sacred Scriptures were there then:
Not the first inspired record made by pen.
No Sabbath-school varied the seventh day;
No library-book to while the time away,
And teach them all the while some heavenly
 lore,
Beneath some tree or at the open door.
All unaware to Job, the first supply
For book to be perused by any eye,
Was his own life, whose peaceful ebb and flow
Gave all around him happiness to know:—
His life, the theme for the first printed page;
First pabulum for mind, from age to age;—

Which should the hungering soul amply supply
With fruit that lives and thrives perennially.
Thus, in Job's daily walks, his life embraced
Embodiment of truth to be first placed : —

As in celestial system, remote star
Sends early radiance, that shall travel far,
Bearing its beams with an enlightening ray
To earth-born tenants in life's latest day.
Unconscious, he, as days successive passed,
His life should have a record which should last ;
In time to come, fill many a published tome,
And find a place in every Christian home.

Treasures of wisdom, in the time of Job
(Being, as said, no books upon the globe),
Were stored up in the memories of those men
Who'd reached or passed their three-score years
and ten.

What they'd observed, experienced, and deduced,
Comprised the only library to be used.

He who would be intelligent, must, then,
Consult the wisdom of these aged men :
Research the living volumes of wise age,
Whose every day was one more added page —
Or paragraph, increasing more and more,
The already large, accumulated lore.

But, although yet no book from printing-press
Had issued been, the sons of earth to bless ;
A picture-book, with illustrations given,
Had been bestowed by the All-wise, from heaven.
The universe of matter God designed,—
All things created, planned, and so combined,
That they should typify and illustrate
Things that the mind alone can estimate.
(Some, past the reach of intellect to tell,
In the emotions and affections dwell).
Even His eternal power and God-head, so
That they have no excuse who do not know
The great Creator by His breathing-in ;
Since naught excludes Him in this world, but sin.
To these resources Job might one more add.
In common with all such as crave,— he had
The direct influence of the Divine mind ;
Readier to bless than seeker is to find ;—
Jehovah. Job held intercourse with Him.
And as, by law of mind, it grows less dim,
And more capacious as its powers are used,—
Expansion limitless, unless abused ;
By light prepared for light ; infused by light,
With power to know true honor, truth, and
right ; —

So Job expanded in his mental powers,
Unconscious, as of perfume are the flowers.
Indeed, of self he never thought to think,
No more than fountain meditates on drink.
His mental powers so clear and copious grew,
Deductions flashed from premises all true.
His active, well-trained, regulated mind,
Saw right from wrong clearly and well defined.
All held his judgment perfectly correct ;
None criticised, nor charged him with defect.
What he inferred was happily received :
His statements all undoubtingly believed.
None controverted ; none required a proof ;
Whate'er he spake was truth — both warp and
woof.

Such confidence made all contention cease,
And Job's conclusions foretold perfect peace.
'Twas known it was his chiefest wish, to bless ;
None thought to appeal, but all to acquiesce
In his decisions. Hence, Job happy stood
A prince and sovereign to the multitude,—
An uncrowned king ; — no diadem he sought ;
The power he held, a symbol needed not.

CHAPTER V.

NATURE'S LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

JOB, with unfaltering confidence, believed
In God's existence; whom, he too conceived
To be a conscious, self-existing One;
Between whom and himself there could be none
To claim his worship. And no sacrifice
Religious, could, by any man's device,
Be drawn from him. He worshipped, loved, ad-
ored
And served his God. All less than God, ignored
As objects that religious rites could claim.
Before his household he revered God's name.
Him he believed to rule by sovereign sway
The habitable earth; that no delay
His righteous government would entertain
To mete out justice in His whole domain.
That He, with ease observed the affairs of all;
The great ones witnessed, and no less the small.
That those who rightly used what they possessed,
Would with abundance be increased and blessed.

That wrongs, by Him would surely be redressed,
No less than others, freely Job confessed.

That God would choose to increase the power of
those

Who kindly strove to lessen others' woes.

With Him compared, to whom all things belong,
No man was powerful, righteous, wise, nor strong,
Nor mighty, nor intelligent, nor just;

Nor worthy to receive implicit trust;
None perfect — never wholly justified:

In God alone might confidence abide.

So high, above man's highest reach, attained
The unseen God, whom Job in thought main-
tained,

To whom alone he adoration paid;

Upon whose altar all his offerings laid;

No other object could admit between

Himself who worshipp'd, and his God unseen.

But such assurance came not without thought;

Through deep-toned, mental conflict it was
wrought.

There is an element in all mankind

Inducing worship,— more or less refined.

Those around Job, worshipp'd the glorious sun,

In morning hour; and when, his day's course run,

The golden orb its crimson colors lent,
Crowning with rays resplendent; then they bent
Prostrate in worship. Nor was Job unmoved.
For when the effulgent beams had almost proved
O'erpowering,—when the eyes of all who dared
Gaze on its brightness, in a blindness shared,
Job, too, with hand upon his lips, almost
Adored. But this was in his youth. The host
Of worshippers around he had withstood,
Until alone, among a multitude,
When rose the sun, in gorgeous splendor bright,
Or moon walked lustrous, with a paler light,
He could behold, with no enticement felt,
Though all around in adoration knelt.
Job, by God's works, so plainly to be seen,
Knowledge of the Invisible did glean.
God's natural attributes perceived, and felt,
And oft in silence on the subject dwelt;
Admired His matchless wisdom, power, and skill;
Conceived His watchful care abiding still.
That He a God of system was, 'twas true,
Since every orb in space its orbit knew.
The seasons knew their annual return,
And day and night the time their lights to burn.
But whether He were Being who could feel

Compassion for the suffering, and would heal
The wound from sympathetic chord, — reply,
Nature gave not; powerless to testify.

(The highest artist doth himself impart,
To bring forth perfect his high work of art;
But, in the work, himself doth deftly hide,
And leave observers to his work of pride.

Nor ask for notice, till admirers cry
To know the author who has blest their eye.

So the Most High in nature is concealed,
And only hides that He may be revealed.

He will not entrance force, but waits, to greet,
Who, more than matter in material, seek.)

A problem came to Job,— at home, abroad.

'Twas earnest. “How shall man be just with
God?”

It gave him pause. No answer came from far,
From sun or moon, or brightest twinkling star:
No breeze that wafted through the atmosphere,
Floated an answer to the listening ear.

Though peal of thunder wakened echoing roar,
Remained but silence, when the sound was o'er.

No breath at daybreak, had a whisper given,
When woke the slumberer from his dream of
heaven.

No perfume, incense-like, on heavenward wing,
 From pale, or rosy flowers, one hint did bring.
 Radiant with beauty from the heavenly fold,
 No infant's smile the secret e'er had told,—
 In whom, their angels see the face divine —
 In new-born children, of the earth-born line.
 They, who the Father's face ever behold,
 Nor one, nor all, the problem did unfold.
 And human life ;—was this life all ? to man ?
 His brief existence here,— merely a span !
 Continual change, he saw material things
 To mark : but change, that, changing, no loss
 brings.

Changing their particles, anew to take
 Relation, — in new union to awake.
 New-vegetated growths from old decays ;
 Brightness to-morrow from the dull to-days.
 And, since no matter is annihilate,
 What does it argue, and what indicate ?
 Suggestions, sure, of immortality ;
 But who shall tell ? where does the answer lie ?
 Were that confirmed, symbols and types were
 these :

But not a proof, that no one doubts who sees.
 A tree, cut down, he saw again would sprout,

Bear leaves, put other boughs and branches out.
But whether man, himself, immortal was,
His mind an essence beyond reach of loss,
He could not answer, yet he fain would know ;
And if, indeed, mind could no loss forego,
Would one retain his own identity
Beyond this life — to all eternity ?
To these, his queries, nature no reply
Gave in response ; but, only sigh for sigh.

CHAPTER VI.

WHY AND WHEREFORE.

THE sons of Job, their father oft had heard
Matters obtruse discuss ; and every word
Had noted ; and how each and every one
Had, more than satisfied, pronounced, " Well
done."

Therefore, they too, with difficulties, came,
Not doubting to experience the same
Complacent satisfaction, when the clear
Solution he would give, should greet their ear.
But who will wonder, if the truth must say,
They sometimes, disappointed, went away ?
He could not answer, why, they had to *learn*
To be unselfish ; why, to yield their turn,
Was less in chord with nature than their breath ;
Why, man must live, by some live creature's
death ;
To love one's neighbor, as one's self as well,
Required more effort than few words could tell ;
Why, to forgive a trespass, or offense,

Was not an easy offering to dispense ;
Why, every animal, excepting man
Begins life balanced ? why he never can ?
Why, *he* should not be poised at first, and stand,
And over all his powers have strict command ?
Why every infant, in its will is strong ;
In reason weak, and so remaining long ?
The sons of Job, these questions oft, at feast
Discussed and argued, from the first to least.
With eager ears their sisters, all the while,
Listened to sanction with approving smile ;
Or, if they must needs, to reprove by frown ;
Never to quell, or put discussion down.
There came, sometimes, this question mingling
in, —
Was evil in this world, a fault, a sin,
Or a misfortune ? if a fault, whose blame ?
And how came it to rest on whom it came ?
No barrier their father interposed,
To check the questions that his sons proposed.
Reason — the greatest boon from God to man
By nature given ; which, dispossessed, there can
No gift be recognized ; nor Giver known ; —
He'd shudder to degrade, or to dethrone.
But, latest on his mind, before he slept,

And earliest waking, there his sons he kept.
And it was so, that when their feasts had run
Round from the eldest to the youngest one,
He sent and sanctified them; early rose,
Relinquishing the early dawn repose:
Burnt-offering offered, ere should business call,
According to the number of them all.
Every burnt-offering, in itself implied
Acknowledgment of guilt: — not justified: —
The offerer's wish to be, with God, at one:
His self-surrender, reservation none:
His consecration and devotedness
To Him who gave; — Who ever lives to bless: —
Himself entire, and all that he possessed.
Thus Job acknowledged God's the hand that
blessed,
And unto God his own indebtedness,
While, for his sons, as priest, he did confess
“For it may be my sons have sinned,” he said,
“And, in their *hearts*, cursed God.” He ne'er
was led
To think that they in *speech* would be profane,
From that, by will, they could themselves re-
frain.
But if, in arguing questions that o'ertasked

Their mental powers,— which him they vainly
asked —

They should, for lack of answer, lay the blame
Upon their nature; it would be the same
As charging God with blame: — a silent curse,
To charge on God sin in His universe.

Religiously they had been reared, but yet
They might revolt, might waver, might forget.
Hence, Job's anxiety caused him to rise
And freely offer early sacrifice;

When, with the ascending, curling smoke, the
prayer

Of pious father vibrated the air,
That his sons might in holy life be built,
Be saved from sin and consequence of guilt.
Nor was this circumstance occasional;
'Twas constantly in mind: — continual.

Not yet had dawned upon the mind of Job,
That things unseen, and scenes upon this globe,
Bear near relation, — interlock, and tie:
That, to the Author — the All-seeing eye —
The universe is one. None may divide
The bond of union, by Creator tied.
Job believed firmly in a righteous God,
Who, the right-doer, surely would reward.

He knew no life beyond this life on earth:
Viewed death the end, as the beginning birth.
Therefore he looked, as did those of his day,
For compensation, with but brief delay,
Or none at all. Long life could gather more
Of bliss. Year after year increase the store,
Hence, length of life, became to all the sign
Of approbation of the One Divine.
A long and happy life was Job's desire,
Not less for children, than himself, their sire.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPIRIT-REALM UNVEILED.

WITHOUT a prelude or prologue the scene
Suddenly changes, and the realm unseen
Breaks on our vision. Now, with mind attent,
Let us receive this revelation, meant
To disclose things above the realm of earth,
Where the immortal has its native birth.
Freely and natural as one would say
"The room above," or, "house across the way,"
Speaks he of spirit-realm, who thus narrates
The life of Job. With confidence he states,
As though no doubt would ever rise to call
In question, "Did Job ever live at all?"
As though he *felt* that the celestial realm
From earth's was separate only by the hem
Of matter that incarnates human mind;
Not *thought*, but felt the truth not then defined.
'Tis seldom that the veil is thus withdrawn
To give such vision as that young day's dawn;
But so to Job's biographer 'twas given,

To see things in the realm that we call heaven.
Let us, with him, behold what there he saw,
And all disclosed there, from the vision draw.
This author opens up a subject new ;
New characters presents he to our view.
So does he scenes in heaven and earth rehearse,
We see them portions of one universe ;
Not separate dominions, ruled alone,
But each a portion subject to one throne.
God's one dominion, centralized His throne
In vastness, called the skies unseen, unknown,
Where justice, honor, truth and right, maintain
Harmonious union in prolonged refrain.
Turning from Job, and what to him pertains,
By leap of mind we reach the vast domains ;
Admitted seem, — as witnesses, stand nigh
The council-chamber of the One Most High.
Enwrapt we listen, while the writer tells
Of scenes enacted where Omniscience dwells.
No longer on the prelude we delay,
Proceed direct to poem, song, or lay,
As said or sung by bard of ancient day.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DISCLOSURE.

THERE was a day when came the sons of God,
Not by constraint, but of their own accord ;
For audience before the Lord they came ;
Also, among them one, Satan by name.
A day it was ; for not monotonous
Is life in heaven ; simply continuous ;
Where multitudes the same song ever sing,
And angel-choirs, veiling with silvery wing,
In the same posture without varying bend,
On, and still on, a period without end ; —
Unchanging ever as long ages roll ; —
Not such the home that waits the ransomed soul.
Eternity will never pass away ;
Yet marks its horologue its measured day.
And there are days that stirring interest mark,
Unchecked by night ; no night is there, no dark.
So active are the actors in that life,
And that for those on earth's wild field of strife,
That earth's most active do, as 'twere, but dream ;

Or as spectators calm and passive seem.
 That day, it was the sons of God who came ; —
 What near relation indicates that name !
 Life, — God-derived, — conscious, could it be
 less ?
 But, conscious thought, or lacking consciousness ;
 Finite existence of whatever grade,
 Material or immaterial made, —
 Creation all, howe'er identified,
 Whether as mind, or matter, classified, —
 Each finite being, howsoever known,
 Before possessing self-hood of its own,
 Ideally existed in God's mind ;
 Subjective then ; — its object-place to find
 In God's own time, when, in its destined space,
 He gives the subject an objective place ;
 Marks out its orbit, which, while it retains
 Its life is joyous, and unknown are pains.
 All spirit-life thus first held life in God,
 Cherished, to fill its ordained space abroad.
 Conceptions then, creations yet to be,
 In an embodied objectivity.
 Ideal first, then, new created ones,
 Related to their Author as His sons.
 On them conferred the right and power to choose,

Will, and determine, — also, to refuse
To keep their orbit, in the space defined, —
Free moral agent is each new-born mind.
Affirmatively choosing — to remain,
And the appointed pathway to maintain;
As sons related, such will ever be,
And feel the oneness of one family.
That sonship, which with consciousness begun,
Will with duration never cease to run; —
The tie that binds in happy harmony,
Confirmed, established, permanent, yet free.
Thus they accept what God ordained to be
Their heritage from all eternity.
But if refused, heirship becomes annulled;
With sonship slighted, highest powers grow
 dulled; —
Perverted by misuse, perception blind,
A worse than blank, the once pure thinking
 mind.
From royal sonship and its titles all,
Such self-condemned, self-doomed, will their own
 fall.
They, then, are sons of God, who recognize
God as their Author — Father; and the ties
Derived from this — their highborn privilege —

Such, all their powers to bind the union pledge.
Conscious that He bestows all they enjoy,
They would not wrench from Him, His claim
destroy.

Existence owes to Him both life and bliss,
Nor choose they to depart from love like this ;
But, grateful, their relation they maintain,
Their nature cherish, with perpetual gain.
Self-centered not, their aspirations flow,
Pulsating God-ward with increasing glow.
Centered in Him, whom they as Father claim,
With impulse right, and natural as His name.
For as the parents' choice and habits' sway,
Give impulse to the child in the same way,
In human kindred ; so does the Divine
Nature transmit by choice, will and design,
Impulses noble, high, pure, like His own
To all His offspring, — and would fain be known
By their resemblance, — with a tendency
To sway and bias in the self-same way ;
To holy happiness and bliss complete ;
To regal honors and a royal seat.

CHAPTER IX.

A CELESTIAL GATHERING.

SUCH were God's sons, who freely came one day
Before the Lord, as impulse led the way.
Among them, but not of them, Satan came
With bold assurance, precedence to claim ;
Vaunting within, to make appear as true,
That more than this he was entitled to.
The truth with which his nature was impressed,
The instincts and impulses he possessed,—
These he resisted, that denied ; abused
His reasoning powers, and utterly refused
Allegiance to whom loyalty is due :
Raised a revolt, proposed a system new,
Scorned His paternity, boldly denied
The need and obligation to abide
In the All-Father : and persisting still,
By virtue of the freedom of his will,
In opposition to all true and right,
Threw o'er the universe the hue of night.
Became self-willed, usurper all unawed,

Adverse to God's creation, and to God.
And, by his influence o'er the heavenly host,
Drew one third part to be among the lost.
Of those remaining, borne not by his sway,
None could deny his claim that His course lay
In true accord with reason. They believed
God's system right, by all should be received.
Satan denied. They could not demonstrate,
Were happy in God's service, chose to wait,
And trust God's way and time to make all plain,
Which Satan would not do, nor would refrain
From mingling where he would not harmonize ;
Falsehood and force, is armed to exercise.
For these, with favoritism he did aver,
Comported with God's real character.
Satan's own *character* he set at naught,
His *reputation* would not lose for aught.
That, by perversity was self-destroyed ;
This, gloated over, and as much enjoyed
As baseness can enjoy that which is vile ;
Taste lost for all that will not help defile.
As carrion crow revels on tainted food,
He relished not, but felt disgust at, good.
His reputation 'twas, in which arrayed,
Made him presentable and undismayed.

He'd lost his virtue, not his intellect ;
 He could assume, arrange, scheme, plan, direct.
 For with divinest, noblest powers of mind,
 Amply equipped, with faculties refined,
 Adapted to position high ; endowed
 Therefore he'd been : — became ungrateful,
 proud.

Boldly with God claimed peerage, did deny
 God's character superior to a lie.
 What Satan was, he was as God designed ;
 God's system for him *fallen*, no place could find.
 "Son of the morning," he began his race,
 Like lightning fell from heaven and lost his
 place.

Now be it asked, "God knowing he would fall,
 What need that Satan should exist at all ?
 Since he will deviate immediately,
 Were it not better that he should not be ?"
 The answer is, and they who think well know,
 God can embody thought in that so low,
 It does not know the thoughts therein that
 dwell ;
 Powerless to see, perceive, conceive, or tell.
 And must God then, no conscious thought begin,
 Because some one or more will surely sin ?

Without experimenting, God can give
In the best way best being power to live.
And His ideal must not God disclose,
Because when self-discovered 'twill oppose ?
Than what is best, He cannot better do ;
Less than the best, will not, as He is true.
Hence God, by right, gave Satan power to be ;
Moved to right impulse, but his choice left free :
While all around prevails heaven's harmony,
One sweetly-chiming, perfect symphony.
All his environments, surrounding, stand,
Conformed to his own needs, and God's com-
mand.
If one assert, another straight deny,
How shall truth be confirmed ? made plain the
lie ?
God waits, and works, to bring His truth to
view.
Deeds more than words confirm a statement
true.
God's patient, suffering love left out of sight,
Would dim His character to hue of night.
Because His Being in itself commands
Love, honor, all is due which He demands.

CHAPTER X.

SATAN'S CHALLENGE.

SATAN, now fallen in heart, but clear in head,
Would not relinquish, although forfeited,
The high position God's appointment gave :
Bold, insolent, resolved truth to outbrave
By manner and appearance that should win
Him approbation, and God's ranks make thin.
And by his suavity, address, and tact,
Success began ; and he, in very fact
Won, from the glorious company of heaven,
A sympathy, that, like exciting leaven,
Brought tumult, where before was holy peace, --
An agitation, signing no surcease.
Hand to hand combat :— he with God engaged,
Was what he sought. He would have God en-
raged ;
Would tempt him, by all means within his
power,
And thus advance his own victorious hour,
And, when attained a large majority,

Proclaim himself the reigning deity.
Meanwhile, till God should so enraged become,
He would belie him, till heaven should grow
dumb.

Therefore, it was, that in the days of Job,
Experiences on this earthly globe
Were not alone where patience sore was tried.
From Satan heaven not yet was purified.
Because he merited expulsion, and
God's powerful word could make him withering
stand,

Yet, him to banish, while it was unseen,
By those who never had disloyal been,
That such was his desert; was not God's way
To carry on His government. Display
Of power marks not the system he designed.
His service has regard to powers of mind; —
Accords with reason. Nor would he expel
Till the free shout, "God doeth all things well,"
Rings from the heart unanimous of all;
Then, forthwith, Satan shall, as lightning, fall.
The point at issue, in the argument
'Twixt God and Lucifer, which Satan meant
Should be decided by his sophistry,—
Claiming that he unlocked the mystery,—

Was the existing basis which alone
Supports the pillars of the Almighty's throne.
The one foundation, first required, to base
True concord that shall last unending days :—
The strong support, only on which sure stone,
The native right, and healthy moral tone
Of universal government can stand,
Forming united, one harmonious band.
Unselfish interest,—this true principle,
Satan denied, as past the possible.
And, even its existence, he denied ;
Holding that all will selfishly decide.
That each one has his price, all may be bought :
From low to high, not one but can be caught
Aiming at gain, and all for selfish ends ;
And, he declared, this principle extends
To God's own throne ! He had discovered this,
That self-promotion is the road to bliss.
Benevolence unselfish, he averred,
Existed not : was nothing but a word.
That nowhere could beneficence be found.
That not in heaven, nor on the earth around,—
Throughout the circuit, neither there nor here,—
Could type of love's unselfish form appear.
He'd challenge the Almighty, and defy

Him to present one instance to the eye.
Thus boldly, the prime minister denied
The principles of court, that must decide
Right or unright, the acts of all in space :
Determine each one's fitness for his place.
Declined he to vacate, with stubborn will,
The station, thus disqualified to fill,
Till demonstration full should vindicate
God's principles, and his invalidate.
Believed himself with ample power possessed
Subtly to frustrate, and destroy the best
Attempt at demonstration possible.
The while, assumed he air most plausible,
As though himself were being set aside
For perspicacity, and insight wide ;
Instead of shutting from himself the light,
And leading captives into darkest night :
Deluding them, by promise of a throne,
Where all should be as gods, knowing and
 known ;
Brook no delay, follow their own sweet will ;
And none should serve, but each be sovereign
 still.
So claimed he homage, with a bold demand
For proof that could his argument withstand.

Not God's foreknowledge, nor His power to
 prove,
Could diminish His depth of suffering love ;
Long-suffering kindness is His principle,
He, self-sustained, will bear the crucible.
Satan, not banished, God permits to appear
When the true sons of God assemble near,
Till God's requirements proved both right and
 just,
Disarm opponents and exclude distrust.
Without corruption, bitterness, or ire,
God deigns to argue with the rebel liar.
His love is seen, His condescension known,
In His forbearance toward the rebel shown,
Kindling like flame in ministers of state, —
The sons of God who ready serve or wait.
The waiting ones accept God's leave to find
Witness for God, among the human kind.
God then commissioned Satan to the earth,
Where he might find a man of matchless worth,
Whose life was governed by unselfish love —
The principle proclaimed in heaven above.
He, from that trip returning, chose a day
When came the sons of God, about to say
That they had found a specimen to meet

God's standard, and his enemy defeat.

Radiant with love, their countenances glow
With lustre, that themselves nor think nor know.
Transfused with light, their raiments' lustrous
sheen

A halo sheds above earth's noon-day scene.

Before God's all-transcending light they stand ;
Beams of His love interfuse all the band.

They touch their harps, a symphony is rung,
A prelude to the song they would have sung.

Just at that point, Satan, — it is his way, —
Among them came to dash their joy away.

Prime ministry gives him the precedence ;
The loyal, therefore, with due deference,

So change their range that he shall have his
right,

Their range, so changed, holds him in their full
sight.

For, had the loyal testified the first,

Satan was armed to explode a sudden burst
Of refutation, eloquently given,

That should call forth applause from host of
heaven.

And hence, 'tis wise he first should testify,
Since that which he affirms, he can't deny

On subsequent occasion, but to expose
His real character, and so disclose
Himself a liar having no defense ;
Be vanquished quite thereby of consequence.
And, speaks he truth, himself can not demand
A confirmation, ere as truth it stand.
For Satan's lie must have some truth to stand
Upon. All lie is like a rope of sand.
Full well Jehovah knew where he had been,
With what determination, whom he'd seen ;
With what temptation he had vainly tried
The saintliest man from right to turn aside.
Satan feels equal, waits the question now —
Jehovah speaks. He asks, "Whence comest
thou ?"

Not willing to appear too glad to know
That he the truth of God can straight o'erthrow,
With graceful air, and complete nonchalance,
Unbending form, but with an eye askance, —
Be it remembered that the angel-band
With ears attent listen to understand.
Now, as his utterance vibrates on the air,
All heaven is hushed, nor echo answers there.
"From yonder earth ; there going to and fro
And walking up and down in it." 'Twas so.

So much was true. But do the angel band
Think, or half think, they see beneath the bland
Soft-speaking lips, and hear beneath his tone,
A loss of something that they must bemoan ?
But what he said is true. Of that they're sure.
For lies he not to lie, but to secure
Advantage by deceit ; author of lies,
He uses lies for ends ; as serpent, wise.
When truth will best subserve, the truth he'll
ply ;
That failing, he'll accomplish by a lie.
Bland and complacent, when his answer's done,
The admiring gaze of angels he has won,
Who wait to hear Jehovah speak again.
He asks, with comprehensive utterance plain :
" My servant Job, hast thou remarked his worth,
That there is none like him in all the earth,
A perfect and an upright man, and one
That feareth God, escheweth evil ? " None
In heaven the stillness break. But forward bend
The angel witnesses, to comprehend
Satan's responsive, audible reply.
Well may their faces gleam. To testify
Of Job they one and all had joyful sped,
And now have sanction of their Sovereign-Head.

Are sure that Satan must, convinced, succumb,
Admit the proof, or, unlike him, stand dumb.
For some of this now joyful waiting band,
Had been Job's body-guard ; ready to stand
By day or night, to cheer or soothe his way ;
Had seen him sacrifice, had heard him pray ;
Had calmed his slumbers when he sought repose,
Had watched his pious waking when he rose.
They fain would answer ; waiting words would
run,
To tell of deeds of kindness he has done,
Which they have witnessed : wrongs he has made
right ;
Justice established ; to the blind been sight ;
Honor he never ceased to vindicate ;
The fettered poor he freed from their low state ;
Integrity maintained, ills he relieved ;
All sorrowing ones his sympathy received.
So ready are the witnesses to tell, —
In heart and mind so does the subject dwell,
That the mere moment Satan takes, to draw
Himself into an attitude to awe,
Seems long. But Satan speaks. Each angel-
face
Beams with a reverent and a radiant grace.

Then Satan answered to the Lord and said, —
As though he argued from a pious dread, —
“Doth Job fear God for nought?” within him
 surged

A roiling tumult that on madness verged ;
Seething with wildness like the troubled sea
Till to his inmost self he seemed to be
The sole one swayed in all extended space.
All else seemed calm. He scarce could bide his
 place.

Began to think his face must be concealed,
Or all his lie to truth would be revealed.
A veil of superciliousness he drew
His features o'er ; self-flattered, thought he knew
 His case was won.

But, through the angel group
A shudder ran ; it seemed their wings to droop.
Their fervent ardor chilled ; 'twas at the sound
Of him perfidious that they had found,
Or thought they'd found, most faithful to his
 trust.

Must they distrust him ? could it be they must !
Had Job, whom they had been a guard around,
Had girded in his service, now been found
As Satan said, serving for selfish ends ?

Their mission then to earth no good attends.
 Benevolence unselfish, — this it was —
 The object of their missionary cause.
 To find a perfect man according with
 God's standard ; thus to prove that no mere myth
 Was the idea, held in *beneficence*,
 But actual outgrowth of benevolence.
 Jehovah had pronounced Job perfect and
 Upright. Themselves had thought him so to
 stand.

Does Satan know ? Was God not in the right ?
 Observing with side glance the now half blight,—
 Check in the flow of angel spirit, flight of wing
 Suspended, Satan quick proceeds
 His point to argue ; boldly calls for deeds
 That shall confirm God's statement, if it's true,
 Leaving no doubt that one can hold to view.

“Hast Thou not made a hedge about him and
 About his house, and doth that hedge not stand,
 Protecting round about on every side
 All that he hath ? extending far and wide !
 The work his hands have done Thou'st blessed.

Increased

His substance in the land. Let this be ceased.
 But put forth Thou Thy hand and now efface,

Touch all he hath, he'll curse Thee to Thy face."

Had Satan been last called to testify

Instead of first, the sons' of God reply

To that same question would have been, that
they

Had found Job perfect and upright alway,

Giving compliance cheerful to God's law,

To Him his first best service; that they saw

Him deal by all with just and honest hand,

Dealt, as he would be dealt by, through the land.

The motives prompting him, they knew quite
well,

They were unable to discern and tell.

They thought that God beheld him with delight,

And thus approved, since God beheld him right

In impulse, motive, deed, design, intent;

Had furnished means; that Job's benevolent,

Kind disposition might have full supply,

Taking its course, itself to gratify

In deeds benevolent: did thus confer

His bounty, making Job the almoner.

But this, by Satan boldly was denied,

The test he now demanded to be tried.

And, if Jehovah should the test refuse,

Satan will straightway say He dare not use

The only method truth to justify ;

And then, exulting, claim the victory.

He knew that it would this appearance wear ;

That God would choose from suffering, Job to
spare.

That God loved Job no less than He approved ;

That Job's possessions were not misimproved ;

That 'twould grieve God to deal with heavy
hand

Toward pious Job, who would misunderstand,

And think that God with him must be displeased,

He hoped the test would vanquish, e'er it ceased.

That so not one example, far or near,

Of service on God's basis might appear.

Unselfish service : God's requirement, yet,

Not by the the eye, on tablet, to be met ;

But, by the Author who did life impart,

Deeply imprinted on the human heart,

And in the mind ; where reason signs accord

By power of understanding, and award

Of an approving conscience ; which, combined,

Prove correlation 'twixt God's law and mind.

“Put forth thy hand now and touch all He
hath,”

Satan demands, repressing ire and wrath.

Jehovah knew full well, should He comply,
Satan would boldly still the truth deny ;
Would say that God had mingled mercy so
In the removal, Job felt not the blow.
That loss of his possessions, Job ignored,
Expecting all to him would be restored.
Therefore, to silence Satan, and make truth
Triumphant, power was given to him, for-
sooth :

To Satan the Lord said, "Behold all that
He hath is in thy power." Now the combat
Is sure. God knew Job would remain intact ;
Knew Satan would abuse his power, the fact
To him disclosed. Therefore a bound is given
To him ere he goes forth from highest heaven
Upon his mission of malevolence,
Disguised by putting on a false pretense.
Satan, exulting in his vantage ground,
Restrains himself from leaping with a bound.
Jehovah adds sublimely one command,—
"Only upon himself." — Satan, still bland, —
Assumed demeanor: "Put not forth thy hand."
It is enough ; why should he put his hand
On Job? He's sure he can command
His curse on God, ere his prosperity

Is sudden blasted by adversity.

So Satan from the presence of the Lord

Went forth: free agent, of his own accord

To do his will, and make it to appear

The will of Him was done whom Job did fear.

Forth from the presence of his consciousness

Of God's all-seeing eye; but none the less

Within His vision whose omniscient view

Regards all space; all things sees clearly
through,—

Forth from God seen; the empyrean, where

The sons of God remained assembled there.

The conference that ensued, no records state:

But if Job had been in their charge of late,

Then their commission is at once withdrawn,

Withheld at sombre night and early dawn.

If it had been the sons of Job to guide,

To guard and shield them that no ill betide,

That so the father may be spared from grief,

Nor pierced where hardest found is true relief;

His servants, flocks and herds, were these their
wards

To watch, secure, protect from all marauds;

Directly their commission is withdrawn.

And, should they see a depredation on

His flocks or herds, or his possessions all,
They must withhold all aid ; the blow let fall ;
Stand but as silent witnesses unseen,
Observing closely ; naught must come between
Satan and Job. Their perspicacity,
Keen, able, quick-discerning scrutiny,
Must witness bear for Job's sincerity,
Or, unconvinced of his hypocrisy.
Commissioned thus, with leave to make report
When quite convinced, at the celestial court ;
The angel-embassy with speedy flight,
To the arena bend their earnest sight.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ATTACK.

JOB, in the circuit of his busy life —
As magistrate, the arbiter of strife,
As priest and patriarch, husband, father, friend,
Rearer of flocks and herds; — the which to vend
Brought dealers far and wide, and caravans;
Helpers and hinderers in forming plans;
Appeals for labor, and appeals for aid; —
Found life's warp filling; while the web it made
He scarcely retrospected. Less did he
Imagine that to such a dignity
Was he exalted, where the great Supreme
Sees all things as they are; not as they seem
To mortal eyes — disjointed at the birth:
Sees from His own standpoint; not that of
earth.

Job had no thought that he was called to be
Witness for God; subject select, that he
Was held as object for celestial eyes
To look upon, and seeing, grow more wise;

Become confirmed ; know better God is true ;
And, as God reasons, themselves reason too.
Job did not know it, but we know it well,
Would sing as anthem, with a chorus swell,
Till every sufferer of the present day
Should catch the pæan and join in the lay.
Yea, every sufferer, but 'tis only he
Can reap in joy, who sows integrity.
He who is conscious that, he that maintains,
This consolation has, when tried with pains,
God takes cognizance how well he endures.
Perhaps, as witness he in heaven secures
Some glorious end. He may the measure fill
Of Christ's own sufferings, and be one who will
When Christ appears as victor, thus attain
A closer nearness ; more exalted reign.
Now all the wealth this righteous man pos-
sessed,—
This servant of the Lord, approved and blessed,
All his possessions, all he called his own
Are held by Satan, and may be o'erthrown
As by his malice or his stratagem
He plans to bring Job to curse and condemn
Him whom Job worships now with godly fear,
And seeks to bring to others' minds more near.

Not by God's choice was Satan chief in charge
Of Job's possessions, with the power at large
To dispossess, to wrench, destroy, bereave
Of all he had and held; nor aught to leave.
But, in God's system of free agency
This course exists as a necessity.
Not now devised, but seen as a must-be
In the vast by-gone of eternity.
In the best system that could be arranged
God saw a sure, sad certainty. Unchanged
Himself, correlative and remedy, —
Provision held for every need to be.
For every woe that every one might feel,
Held in himself the sovereign power to heal.
From the foundation of the world God knew
What He in each specific case would do.
Which knowledge in itself includes each fact
That ever should exist; yea, every act
From small to great that should occur; knew all,
Minutest cell and tiniest sparrow's fall;
Knew each one's life, where each should first
 draw breath,
His choice, his will, his course, his day of death;
And, this foreknowing, fore-ordained the day
When each one's life the perfect part should
 play,

To build the system, which, when all complete,
His saints with Him should share His royal seat.
The property of Job in Satan's clutch,
No delicacy is there in the touch.
It is his aim to make each blow a blast,
And each succeeding, heavier than the last.
It was the birthday of Job's eldest son ;
The child with which the father's joy begun,
When, in the house assembled, which his sire
For him had built,— by mutual desire,
The seven brothers with their sisters stay,
To celebrate the eldest's natal day.
And all were feasting, while the new-pressed
 wine
Refreshed their thirst, and lent its sparkling
 shine.
To-morrow morning will the father pay
A sacrifice, for their mistakes to-day ?
E'en now, perchance, the loving father's heart
The sacrificial lamb has set apart.
If even now he preparation makes,
Another subject his attention wakes.
A messenger brings sad intelligence :—
“ The oxen, plowing, mules beside them, hence
Are driven away. The Sabeans came, and fell

Upon, and took them : and, still worse to tell
With their sword's edge they have the servants
slain,

While I, alone escaped, the whole to explain.”
Thoughts of surprise the mind of Job impress,
That stalwart Africans could not possess
Themselves of plunder, and, therewith content,
Until they had, with murderous intent,
His faithful servants with their sword's-edge slain.
But ere the courier ceased, he to complain
Begun ; another came : thus Satan planned,
'Twas his arrangement, done at his command.
Nor knew the workers they by him were
taught ;
They thought their minds alone contrived the
plot.

The mind has its apartments, and takes in
Its unseen guests. It may be aids to sin,
Or holiness : depends upon the choice,
The pure admit the pure ; the vile alloys.
The second messenger, upon the first,
Alarmed, breaks in with sudden breathless burst :
“The fire of God hath fallen from heaven, and
hath ”—

Satan meant here to indicate the wrath

Of God toward Job. Oh, waiting angels, hear!
For Satan's sure the curse will now appear —
Will be pronounced by Job, when, straight from
 heaven,
God's fire — “consumed the sheep and servants,”
 even!

“And I,” the servant adds, “alone have well
Escaped, to thee, the shocking truth to tell.”
(What of thy lamb, O Job, for sacrifice
At morn? Thou servest God! Is this the
 price?)

The second speaker had not finished, when
A third appears to Job, and he, again
To bring sad tidings:—that “the Chaldeans
 came

In bands of three, and have the camels slain.
They, too, have slain the servants with the
 sword;

And I, alone escaped to bring thee word.”

Satan now meant by force to hurry up.

'Tis the last drop that overflows the cup.

The heaviest blow he now holds in reserve;

Dernier resort, that shall his purpose serve.

He would have gloated over the result,

Could he have wrung from Job curse and insult

By half the ruin wrought; thus to have given
Proof of predictions he had made in heaven.
Came the last messenger ere ceased the third;
Nor breaking gently with a soothing word:
"Thy sons and daughters eating, drinking wine,—
'Twas at his house, — the eldest son of thine,
Their eldest brother": — Not the Sabeans now,
Nor Chaldean bands, to make his servants bow
In their last sleep: but, from the wilderness,
An unseen power; — the wind. 'Twas wont to
 bless.

"Behold there came a great wind, with wild
 roar,
Which smote the house; attacked the corners
 four:

It fell upon the young men, they are dead.
To tell thee, I escaped; alone I fled."
Now all is gone. Job stands. Let all be
 hushed!

Will Job now curse? Is God, or Satan,
 crushed?

Then Job arose, and shaved his head, and rent
His mantle. Tokens all of grief. He bent
In sorrow. Prostrate, on the ground, he fell
And — worshipped! while the sons he loved so
 well

Slept their last sleep. Profound and solemn
grief!

To such a mourner, what can bring relief?

He speaks. No curse sounds from his lip; — no
blame.

“Without possessions into life I came;

Naked came I. I shall return the same.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,

Blessed be His name.” No more his lips could
say.

Sublime emotions! mastery sublime:

Echoes resound the utterance throughout time.

By his bereavements, Job appears to have thought

That his own life was, to its last verge brought.

That All-wise Providence had first removed

Those who would miss so much the heart that
loved:

Has first dismissed his cares: now will he wait,

Resigned, dismissal from his mortal state.

Job's calm, submissive, pious state of mind, —

Instead of that which Satan had designed, —

Placed him in harmony with things on high,

And brought celestial influences nigh.

As vessel, with sails set, and helm all right,

Will catch the breeze, and bring the port to
sight;

So Job received heaven's inspirations in,
That lift above a world of woe and sin.
The angel of the Lord encamping round
Them that fear Him, near Job might have been
found.

Nor merely one, a glorious company, —
The sons of God, — witnessed the harmony,

CHAPTER XII.

SATAN DEFEATED.

SATAN, for one wild moment, stands aghast,
Brought up point-blank, and nonplussed at the
last!

His ammunition gone! Job's all, he's spent.
He, vanquished is; with lack of armament.
No resource in himself, whence shall he turn?
Self-conscious fire, feeling itself to burn:
Himself the fuel:— would it never stop?
Or as wild thirst, without one quenching drop.
Such Satan's self, by his perversity,
Is forming for his long eternity.
He had revolted from the God of love,
Preferred a system of his own, above
The impulse-principle, by God bestowed.
He *was* in truth: but not, in truth, abode:
Denied that any would, by choice, prefer
Unselfish love as base of character:
Made no exception in the One, All-True,
And now, fast fading from his mental view,

Is true conception of the Deity :
 Victim, alas, of his own perfidy.
 Scorning the truth ; pronouncing baseness wise,
 Thus he becomes the dupe of his own lies.
 One cannot constantly declare a lie,
 Without this deleterious tendency.
 Satan, persisting in his adverse course,
 Became producer of an unknown force.
 Power hitherto unknown. God's enemy !
 Wonder profound, in heaven's economy.
 A character, than which, can be no worse.
 Who would curse God, declares himself a curse.
 'Twas his desire continual, to dethrone
 The Almighty, and himself possess alone
 Supreme judicial sway. This motive, led
 Him to appear with a bold front and head,
 When came the sons of God. His malice led.
 Now, checked by non-success from Job to wring
 A curse : he halts, to miss the pluming wing
 Of truth.

And lo, again there was a day
 When the glad sons of God sped on their way
 To announce in heaven that Job had stood the
 test ;
 Proved God's word true. He did not curse, but
 blessed.

Though Satan robbed, and Job was sore distressed,

He was unscathed. No more could Satan wrest,
Or misinterpret truth, whose word is fact.

Satan is vanquished ; Job, by him, intact.

But not, by Satan, unobserved, they wing
Their way. His forces he'll collect, and bring

Himself also among them. On that day
Appears he, his Satanic part to play.

Observing angels note the blight of scorn

Disfiguring his face, once Son of Morn,

While they serene, with ardent listening ear,

Jehovah's unimpassioned question hear

Addressed to Satan. "From whence comest
thou ?"

As formerly, so Satan answered now.

"From yonder earth ; there going to and fro

And walking up and down in it."

Ah no !

Satan is not omniscient ; nor has he

God's own reserved power of ubiquity.

True, up and down the earth with speed he'd
been,

And all his influence used to make Job sin.

Indeed, with this in view, he did incite

The Sabeans, with maliciousness of spite,
Both in the mass and individually
To plunder, and, with rank rascality,
Take human life with cruelty so fell,
That only one was left their deeds to tell.
Did he the shepherds not mislead, to take
Refuge where electricity would make
Its course effectual to destroy with fire,
That it might be supposed to be God's ire ?
Hither and thither, up and down the earth,
Weaving his subtle influence like a girth.
Exciting now the Chaldeans, man by man,
To incorporate, commune, combine and plan,
Or, better, form three communistic bands,
Attack Job's camels, tie the servants' hands ;
Or, wiser, slay them, leaving none to tell
Who did the deed that they had planned so well.
Or, leave perhaps but one, that he might go
Proclaiming levelism, that Job might know
'Twas the Chaldeans had begun the feat,
Nor knew 'twas Satan's plot, as on his beat
From to and fro and up and down the earth,
He caught them captive in his subtle girth.
Satan's reply bore truth thus far. He had
Been up and down the earth ; and dark and sad

The fact that he still treads his earthward tour,
Like roaring lion seeking to devour.
With radiant faces angels listen now, —
Jehovah speaks, while they with reverence bow.
“My servant Job; hast thou remarked his worth,
That there is none like him in all the earth,
A perfect and an upright man, and one
That feareth God, escheweth evil?” None
On Satan looked. The glory of the Lord
Drew all hearts toward Him with a sweet accord.
“Still his integrity he holdeth fast,” —
Had not been scathed by the severest blast, —
“Although thou moved’st me ’gainst him, to
destroy
Him without cause.” Satan in no wise coy
For his defeat, determined Truth to fight;
To rule or ruin by brute force and might;
Reckless of right, lost to all sympathies,
A foe to all! (But, Job in his distress,
Had he but known his dire calamities
The Lord pronounced to be without a cause,
Would have been strengthened, comforted, sus-
tained;
While less the cause at issue would have gained.)
Then Satan from the roiling surge within,

Thus answered to the Lord: "Aye, skin for
skin,

Yea, all that a man hath he'll freely give
For his own life; give all, if he may live.
But put forth now Thy hand, and touch his bone,
Nor only that, leave not his flesh alone;
And then, ah then, he'll curse Thee to Thy face,
The fact will out, give only time and space."
Is not heaven moved to exclaim in deep surprise,
"O, matchless, Satan, are thy cruelties!"
How can they be? For, hear Jehovah say,
"Lo he is in thy hand." And yet they may,
For heartfelt kindness they in Him behold,
Who adds, "But save his life." While Satan,
cold

In aspect, countenance, and in his mien
Showed that restriction needs to come between
Himself and Job, or not Job's life would bide:
Then Satan would declare 'twas suicide.
Satan, permitted by the Lord, proceeds,
And straightway enters on his evil deeds.
No note is given to tell of heaven's discourse;
Relieved of Satan and his ensnared force.
But at his exit shadows must have fled,
All trusting ones must have been comforted;

Assured there was to come a clear, bright day,
When every shadow should have passed away.
But woe to earth, where Satan takes his course,
Resolved to win, by stratagem and force.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SECOND EFFORT.

So, from the presence of the Lord went forth
Satan, to saintliest man in all the earth.
Leaving a statement that must needs be proved,
Or true, or false, — that God be known and
 loved
For what He is, — that what He is be known ;
That in the light of God may walk His own.
Till that light shines, the just shall live by faith ;
God's light gives life, while darkness leads to
 death.
'Tis Satan's forte to wrap in darkness all.
O'er God and truth he'd throw a midnight pall.
If that to do his efforts unavail,
Over each mind he'd throw a blinding veil.
When other schemes prove vain, he'll make
 believe
There is no Satan, so he can't deceive ;
Then entrance gain, where, but for this belief,
He'd no admission find. But this in brief.

Satan descends to Job, and thinks to seize
His prey by a cutaneous disease.
Therefore, to grasp him in his ravening toils,
From head to foot he covers Job with boils.
For, as retainer had he not put in
At chancery of heaven, that "skin for skin,
A man would give for life?" since life was spared,
Job for his losses very little cared.
That ill, not falling on himself, did touch
Him not at all; or if at all, not much.
Hence, Satan urged, it was, Job did not curse.
And, this to prove, bent on his course perverse.
Whereas, from pachyderm, so far removed
Was Job, touched were his sympathies and
 moved,
By slightest sorrow, near or more remote,
Vibrating sure response in finest note.
And every blow Satan had rudely dealt,
Job's sensibilities had keenly felt.
Loss of his children overwhelmed him sore,
Whose forms he'd see, whose voices hear no
 more.
His grief increased that he could make no less
Their mother's grief, who shared in his distress.
If Satan had been dupe of his own lie,

The truth now plainly stood before his eye,
 As, sore with boils from feet unto his crown,
 He Job beheld, whom he had smitten down,
Covered with boils! when one alone can make
 A well man sick, and to his couch betake.
 If Job before had thought his end was near,
 The case now seemed to him to grow more clear.
 The sole position where he finds relief
 Is down among the ashes; — sign of grief.
 The irritation nothing can allay,
 Withal, a potsherd takes he. Comes a day,
 His wife surprised that he has ever stood;
 And now still more at his calm fortitude,
 For lack of morphine, or some sedative
 That can alleviate, can't see him live
 To suffer thus: not knowing life transcends
 The mortal bounds: not with the mortal, ends:
 Herself, with best intentions, now draws nigh,
 To give her best advice, breathed with a sigh.
 "Retainest thou still thy integrity?
 'Tis my advice that thou curse God, and die."
Should he curse God, he thinks no less than she
 'Twould bring the shock of death; — nonentity.
 Who did insinuate into her mind
 Counsel like this? 'Twas he who Eve did blind

And use, to bring her husband's character
To light disclosed. Let him who reads, not err.
Satan well knew when he reserved her life,
The influence she exerted as Job's wife.
If his harsh treatment tempted not to sin,
Job's chosen one from him the curse might win:
The partner of his joys and life from youth,
And who esteemed him for his worth and truth.
His household servants, Job had heard express
In passing, such remarks, nor more nor less,
From them expected. But such words, when
heard
From his wife's lips! It seemed but too absurd
That she should speak like them! He did not
break,
"Ah, foolish woman, *thou*;" but, *like* such, speak.
Harsher reproof he was not wont to bring;
Still courteous, he, though keenly suffering.
No diminution his affection knew,
The cynosure herself he held most true.
"What? shall we not," he adds, to reconcile,
"Receive good from the Lord, and, after while
Evil receive?" So Job submissive bowed,
Nor curse has uttered either low or loud.
At his first resignation happily,

“Job neither sinned nor charged God foolishly,”
The record states : but here somewhat omits.
That Job sinned not undoubtedly admits.
But the omission! Did it signify,
The question that Job asked, — which did imply
That God, from choice, would afflict willingly, —
Evil would, deal, — was charging foolishly?
It may be so, not only may, but must.
When God declared, “dust shall return to dust,”
'Twas not as His first, prime and sovereign
 choice,
But to the truth He gave His sovereign voice.
Evil exists — not by His choice or will,
Nor His permission. While His system still
Evil includes as a fixed certainty.
The system He permits ; and patiently
Endures the evil ; knows the time is sure
It shall be crushed, the system become pure.
Satan from it, and evil all, disgorged ;
He, bound with chains his obstinacy forged.
Then shall no more his corrupt influence sway ;
The unwary capturing, as an easy prey.
No more the faithful his temptations bear,
Evil delivered from, — answered the prayer.
All evil banished. Then the aim and end

Accomplished which creation did portend.
The final restitution then appears,
And God's own hand has wiped away all tears.
All things, restored to harmony divine,
Meet God's ideal — His first grand design.
The natural channel of creative thought,
All keeping time and tune with Him who
wrought
The only perfect system; in whom centers all;
One heart, one mind with the Original.
All finite thought shall be but thought sublime,
With the great Author keeping tune and time.
Evil shall then be in the past, — what *was*,
No longer is, nor *ever* had a *cause*.
The kingdom to the Father then be given,
And God be all in all in earth and heaven.

CHAPTER XIV.

FRIENDS APPEAR.

VIEWING his life as drawing toward its brink,
Job hitherto had not been called to think
Upon himself, by forced necessity.
And, freed from every selfish tendency,
Himself as subject, would not be his choice.
A paradox reality employs,
Proves that unselfish love brings highest joys.
For leaving self quite out of sight, brings gain ;
While he who sows for self, reaps want and
 pain.

Though on the surface this may not appear,
Job's case illustrates, and the truth makes clear.
Aside from self, Job had a large supply
Of themes, wherewith his mind to occupy ;
His wife console ; to dry the mourners' tears,
Whose friends had perished by the Sabeans'
 spears,
Or, by the Chaldeans felt death's cruel pain ;
Defending to the last their master's gain.

This strengthened character, and mind, and heart,
The consolation that he strove to impart
To others, with a quiet, calm rebound,
Became to him a consolation found.

Satan, as men judge, by himself judged Job.
And hence, remorseless, cruelly would probe
His fortitude, determined to command
A curse on God from best man in the land.

Now Job, by dire necessity, was brought
To have no choice of subjects for his thought.
Upon himself his thoughts were forced to light,
No solid rest was his, by day or night.

No potsherd scraping could his pain allay ;

The irritation that he thought to stay
Thereby was but increased, until his skin
Was lost in texture, and what once had been
Expressive index of his state of mind,
Was so much marred, resemblance few could
find.

Features disfigured, flesh diseased, 'twas strange
If, from himself at all his thoughts could range.
'Twas when his suffering had this stage attained,
The tidings reached three far-off friends. They,
pained

At the recital,— three choice friends were they,—

Together meet, confer, appoint a day
To come together, there with Job to mourn
For all the loss and suffering he has borne.
No printed sheet, nor telegraphic aid,
Had Job's calamities all public made;
But bad news then as now would swiftly fly,
While good news, chary, waits and lingers by.
Intelligence came to the Temanites,
The Shuhites heard, and the Naamathites;
And one from each unite in company,
Each for himself, — perhaps as deputy, —
To wait upon the great man of the east,
At whose expense they had been wont to feast;
Over whom now vast depredations spread
Like surging billows, raging o'er his head.
They had not heard of the last trial keen,
Himself attacked, heart-rending to be seen.
Note that Job's losses touched not him alone;
'Twas a great failure, making many moan.
This great reversion, sudden, swift, fell sore,
Like drying up of a vast reservoir.
Business received a check, — a sudden pause;
And many marvelled what could be the cause.
The three friends, who from several districts
came;

Eliphaz, Bildad, Zopher, known by name,
Were grieved for Job, when first his woes they
heard ;
And, suited action to their combined word.
They now, proceeding on their journey's way,
Employ their time with what they have to say.
Each one of Job can something pleasant tell ;
His cheering words they all remember well.
None could be with him and at heart feel dull ;
And, how delightful last year's festival !
He strengthens always by his counsel wise,
And none like him give competent advice.
His noble mien and generous bearing too, —
'Twould do one good, simply to take a view.
And every one would wiser, better grow,
The more of Job to understand and know.
Hope springs within them, that misfortune's
tide
Will soon take turn, react, reverse and glide
As formerly, or with a richer flow.
His birth-day festival is near, they know.
He will by that time, — may e'en now, possess
The due, and sure reward of righteousness.
They doubt not calm serenity prevails ;
No adverse power his inner strength assails.

This acme of their hope and strong desire
Keeps up their strength, supplies their inner
fire,

As to Job's precinct they approach. When, lo!
The man called Job they do not, can not know.
Hopes and desires have such a sudden fall
They lift their voice and weep. And one and
all

Their mantles rend, and sprinkle on their heads
Dust toward heaven; while speaking, each one
dreads.

So sat they with him down upon the ground
Seven days, seven nights, and felt his grief pro-
found;

Express to him in signs what well they see,
His sorrow great, and dire his malady.

To him, they speak not, to each other may;
But who, to Job, shall dare to break the way?
Seven days and nights they go, come, sit, and
sigh,

But not to Job a word of sympathy.

Now he who had been going to and fro,
And up and down the earth,—and must needs
go

To ascertain whatever he would know;

Is rampant still, as he was rampant then,
And deals the same with erring sons of men.
Into each mind he will insinuate,
Can he but find ajar some unclosed gate :
Will watch for access, and will entrance gain,
If he but bare admittance can obtain.
So, with these friends of Job, was Satan free
To judge it now his opportunity.
Arabian princes they ; he knew their creed ;
Knew well the premises were false indeed.
He was familiar with the creed entire ;
To serve his end, no better could desire.
The basis whereupon their faith was built
Held that who suffers, bears the sign of guilt.
While prolonged length of days in man, declares
Him righteous ; and his goodness 'tis, that
spares
His life. That sudden death is merited
By some specific sin done by the dead,
This uniform, accepted, current view
Disqualified these friends for judgment true ;
Impaired the mind to judge impartially :
The premise wrong, so must the inference be.
This error Satan seized as vantage ground,
A weapon keen, the three friends might be
found.

If suffering be an evidence of sin,
A sinner great, most surely, Job has been.
If not apparent, then the sin lies hid ;
Job should confess the wrong deed that he did.
For to condole with one who wrong has done,
Was to become accomplice with that one.
So Satan whispered, and the three gave heed ;
Nor spared a word to Job in his great need.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SILENCE BROKEN.

IN his attack on Job, Satan had dealt
Each blow precisely where 'twould most be felt.
Nor does he deviate to less severe,
When, suffering keenly, Job's choice friends appear.

But so arranged, that the severity
Should compass and include Job's own birthday:—

A day he had been wont to celebrate,
Invoking heaven to bless himself, his 'state.
And these three friends, 'tis probable, had known
The festive joys on these occasions shown.
Their hopes and prayers, undoubtedly arose,
That, ere that day, this direst of his woes
Be lifted from him, and his flesh be healed;
And this but the beginning be; the yield
By heaven repeated in a larger train,
Bring earth's rich treasures, and true friendly
gain.

Job, too, had hope: but hope so long deferred!
But one year since, and blithe as song of bird,
Sang sons and daughters. Now, in silence, they!
Who shall bespeak return of festive day?
Now sick at heart, and weary, must his word
Prepare a prelude, ere from friend he heard?
This sharpens sorrow; — which severity
Their creed approved,—restraining sympathy.
Job is in Satan's power. Thus said the Lord.
Satan, unfeeling, and by no means awed; —
Not by the desolations he had wrought,
Nor sum of all the misery he had brought
To pass; — his one aim, truth to overthrow,
Held fast his power, his grip would not let go:
Hoping, expecting, when Job saw his fate,
The coming birth-day, that he'd curse and hate
His God,—the LORD. And then his prophecy
Would be fulfilled, and all his victory see.
He hitherto had used men unconcerned,
And reckless of the right, so they but earned
By their own methods, what to gain they sought;
Quite unconcerned at ills their mischief wrought.
But now, enlightened men, who God revered,
The self-same God that Job loved, served, and
feared,—

Satan employed: far from their minds the
thought

That *he* employed them; they for Satan wrought!
A week has passed. Now, on the seventh day
Job opes his mouth to speak. What will he
say?

The three friends, waiting, hope he will confess
Some sin or error. How can he do less?

When God does visit such afflictions dire,
Is it not mark of his extremest ire?

Job speaks. He cursed. Ah, Satan turns away;
Job cursed not God; but only cursed his day.

His birth-day, now, the morning light had woke.
In years gone by he had been wont to invoke —

In presence of a goodly company,
Who freely shared, in happy harmony,

His hospitality, and social feast, —

A day all sunshine; without cloud, the least.

Bereaved, afflicted, now, in grief, he prays

For clouds and darkness. For the sun's bright
rays

Seem mockery. He used to wish the day

Might, in remembrance, never wear away: —

His children might the day observe, and tell

How, in their children, should his memory dwell,

Thus he had prayed without distrust, or doubt;
Now prays it be forgot, and blotted out
Forever, from the calendar. Then, he
Sought joyful music, mirthful chorus glee;
But silence now: — for music there's no room.
Then, stars at twilight; now, invoked he, gloom.
For, if his life was drawing to its close
Submerged in grief, and marked with heavy
 woes,
Thus indicating, as by current creed,
That he, a wicked life, had led indeed; —
Had been persisting in a course of sin,
Which he knew false, from witness true within, —
Life was a failure. Better far the deep
Of non-existence, or eternal sleep.
Life lingers still. He longs for it to cease:
Longs more for death, than for a large increase
Of earth's possessions, gems or ores the best:
Longs for that sleep where weary are at rest.
Although life wearies, he will not depart
From conscious right, integrity of heart.
Correct in principle, he will abide,
Nor end his griefs by means of suicide.
Though nothing, of a future life, he knows,
He will not seek, by death, freedom from woes.

Though he regards the grave as only rest ;
The time appointed, counts not, his behest.
The present, past, and future, — all, to him
Is mystery. His cup, up to the brim,
Is more than full. In words, he vents his grief,
Opening the way for ministering relief,
And sympathy, to those who piously
Wait for his speech ; and wait most zealously.
Job does not criminate himself nor can ;
'Twas his intent to be an upright man.
So earnest, in him, did desire arise
To live aright, continual exercise
Of caution marked his daily walk in life.
Conscience bore witness ; nor within was strife.
But though so cautious, what he zealous sought
To avoid, had come upon him. Life was fraught
With woes. Had he been careless, or to blame,
No wonder, then. He had not. Trouble came !
Thus, closed Job's speech ; and thus he made the
way,
For him, to comfort, who had aught to say.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REPLY OF A FRIEND — ELIPHAZ.

THE seven long days and nights, which the three
friends

Speechless toward Job had sat, with this day
ends.

'Tis not to be supposed that they were mute ;
Or passed the time, in silence absolute.

Some words, they dropped ; and then, perhaps, a
pause.

One asked another, what could be the cause
Of Job's afflictions. Why he failed to show
Some sin or error that himself must know ?
Job knew their creed ; knew that it caused the
breach : —

Their silence, — but ignored it in his speech.

'Tis probable, this gave his friends surprise ;

Who thought when Job should speak, he'd re-
cognise

Some overt act, or covert, which had brought,
As retribution, the disasters wrought.

Confession contrite, it was their belief,
Would bring him pardon and direct relief.
Reply is due to Job, and deference
To age, gives Eliphaz the precedence.
Aware of wanting sympathy most true,
His speech begins, with caution running through.
Chiefly absorbed, he is, with the defense
Of abstract doctrine, held with confidence,
Without exploring for a basis sound
To know if true or false his creed be found.
False premises he takes as true, without
Beholding in said premises a doubt.
Now Eliphaz, so zealous for his creed,
Thinks not of sympathy, that Job must need,
And hunger for. Therefore, he gives the reins
To head, instead of heart, to soothe Job's pains.
Since they oppose, he must by one abide.
The head condemns the heart, and bids decide
"Who soothes the sinner, does his sin partake,
And a like doom upon himself shall break."
The head,—located higher than the heart—
The seat of life,—is not the better part.
And who, dethroning heart, exalts the head,
Repeats the error in which Satan led :
Which him o'erthrew : thus causing Satan's fall

From truth ; from life in God. It was the call
 Proceeding from the head, which now this man —
 Eliphaz — heeded. Gently he began : —

“Wilt thou be grieved ?” Words ready wait to
 flow,

Like steed too long restrained, whose bits forego.
 For, while he spake not, silence brooded well
 His meditations, which, like seed, did swell
 To burst the soil, and now are ready quite,
 Volumes of poignant utterance to indite.

“Wilt thou be grieved, O Job, if we assay
 To commune with thee ? Yet who can withstay
 Himself from speaking ?” Then at once pro-
 ceeds

To compliment Job’s past : his words and deeds.
 Thou hast instructed many : not the few
 Have reaped thy wisdom, and grown wiser, too.
 The weak, thy hands have strengthened, and, be-
 hold,

Who would have fallen, thy words did straight
 uphold.

Undoubtedly, himself had strength received ;
 Encouragement at times ; and now believed
 Duty and truth required acknowledgment.
 But, lo ! he quick descends from compliment,

That to discuss which ready waits to burst,
Which, on his mind and in his thought, was first.
He intimates that words of Job which make
Solace for others ; he too, might partake.
Instead of which, with fainting, charges Job,
At trouble's touch. As though in all earth's
globe

A greater sufferer were. At trouble's touch !
He faints ? 'Twas false. He *fainted* not. Was
such

Mere *touch* of trouble ? Lo, his sons are dead ;
His daughters, all, and, need more to be said,
Such words to check ? Health gone, life in sus-
pense !

He cautions Job against strong confidence
In the uprightness of his ways. Gives vent
By asking, " Who e'er perished, innocent ? "
" Or were the righteous e'er cut off ? " and
" where ? "

" Remember thee, I pray." He does not spare.
Job does remember ; knows the allusion, too ;
And feels the question cutting through and
through,

As he recalls each daughter ; every son :
They seem to come before him, one by one.

But Eliphaz continues, though Job weeps ;
Says, " What man sows, he's seen, the same he
reaps."

If sown iniquity and wickedness,
The crop will furnish neither more nor less,
In quality. Such perish by God's blast,
And by His breath will be consumed at last.
This calls to mind, and he intends no less,
The great wind blowing from the wilderness
That smote the house where sons and daughters,
all,
Met sudden death. Loud moans, with Job's tears
fall.

The figure of a lion with young whelps
Gives Eliphaz important aid ; and helps
To indicate what he presumes the cause
That Job so suffers. It is transgressed laws
Of God : and God His law will vindicate
By retribution on, or small or great.
Job *had* been so exalted in his view,
Had he dispenser been, " no evil due
To Job," he would have said. But God had
dealt,
And would not, were Job righteous. Thus he
felt,

While passed the week of days and nights away :
One subject on his mind perpetually.

The thought by day, at night, wove into dream :

A spirit passed before him, just a gleam ;—

The form but indistinct. But trembling awe

Crept o'er the dreamer. Visibly he saw :—

From silence came a voice ; an image stood,—

“ Shall mortal man more just be than his God ?

Be purer than his Maker, shall a man ? ”

Reflecting on his dream, he asks, “ Who can ? ”

Reflection brought conclusion that, no more

Than man, would God inflict. He had, before

His dream, believed this must be truly so ;

Now 'twas confirmed, and he must let Job

know.

It gave him strength to urge Job to commit

His cause to God, who never would permit

Correction undeserved : therefore, Job would

Eventually perceive 'twas for his good

To be chastised. He would renew life's morn,

And close his life, as a ripe shock of corn.

CHAPTER XVII.

PERFECTION, IN SOLITUDE.

THE speech concluded ; now, with many a sigh,
Job, sick and weary, offers his reply :
Reviewed each point which Eliphaz had made ;
And mourned to think his woes so lightly weighed.
Regarded this new trial most severe,
That friends he'd held as true, kind, and sincere,
Should, for their solace to himself, impart
Words that well-nigh had broke his wounded
 heart.

Statements against him cruelly severe,
By his deep sufferings, all confirmed, appear.
While, to himself God's terrors seem to array
Against his life ; his spirit drink away.
His life had been one constant aim at right,
Yet now had fallen on him a deep, dark night !
He, thus dispirited, no comfort drew
From his past life, as daily in review,
Its scenes, or faint or vivid, floated by ;
Both seen and felt by the mind's undimmed eye.

Hope of relief expires ; and having fled,
He longs for dissolution ; — to be dead :
That God would loose his hand, and take away
His life : — would cut him off without delay.
While Job is speaking, fades the light away,
And brings the shadows of the closing day ;
Their lengthening, leads him, by comparison,
To think of servant, who, his labor done,
Desires to see the shadows reach the length,
To call him home, ere yet is spent his strength.
It seems the reflex of his own desire,
Growing more ardent, as the solar fire
Fades in the west. Now he would fain have
rest :

But night, the favor brings not ; nor is blest
By morn's return. And thus the months pass on,
And death comes not. All choice of subjects
gone,

His sleepless self must think upon his flesh ; —
Corrupt, disgusting ! bursts his griefs afresh.

In anguish, he complains to the Most High,
“ Why such distress, yet not allowed to die ? ”

So insignificant, he seems to be !

Now, to himself, he vainly strives to see
The mystery solved, which grows in magnitude,

Betakes he to his habit. (Solitude,
The deepest, sometimes, in a crowd is found ;
Where sympathy is not, is its true ground.)
Habitual prayer had been wont to ascend ;
His thoughts and words had always heavenward
trend.

Job pours his soul out, now, in earnest prayer.
There's no set form, nor others' words are there.
His own expressions meet, alone, his case,
No other one had ever held his place.
'Tis well, heaven is not barred to deep complaint,
That God will hear, what scarce befits a saint
To utter, as from human standpoint viewed : —
And thus make fruitful deepest solitude.
This was Job's habit : here he found relief ;
To go to God, and pour out all his grief.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A FRIEND'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

BILDAD the Shuhite, was quite unprepared
For Job's reply. Eliphaz had not spared,
In his address, strongly to intimate
That Job had merited his present fate.
Bildad expected as result, no less
Than that Job would be influenced to confess
Some wrong, resulting in the death of all
His children; that Job would, perforce, recall:
Perhaps some hidden sin, — the guilt his own —
Which they had not, but he had long time
known: —

A recognition of his ill-desert:
That said confession, would not fail to avert
His present suffering; thereby, his distress
Be mitigated, and his griefs made less.
Since Eliphaz had broke the way, 'twas plain
Job might, with less reluctance, now explain;
With much more freedom — easy readiness,
Than did they not expect him to confess.

With the entirest lack of courtesy,
Bildad proceeds with what he has to say ;
Taking the track which Eliphaz has trod
To help defend the way and works of God.
Less smoothly he, with displayed vehemence,
Keen cutting questions asks, with zeal intense.
Nor courage needed, since he took the way
Of popular belief, in his own day.
He thought Job suffering by the choice of God ;
Whose system, was a penal and reward : —
This, for the righteous ; that, for those who err.
Thought such God's scheme, and such His character !

That God, on throne supernal, regal sat,
And visited so much of this, for that :
The deeds of evil-doer strictly weighed,
And what was evil done, with evil paid :
Debit and credit kept, — a strict account ; —
And would by no means bate the least amount.
Surely, a generous man would pity feel
For one in such position, who must deal
Out evil to him who has evil wrought ;
Yet such was God, to Bildad, in his thought !
Sincere was Bildad ; meant right to defend :
For this he argued ; this his aim and end.

Careful to waver not toward heresy,
He intimates, in Job, hypocrisy,
If he confess not, to some evil deed ;
From whence, his ills and sufferings all, proceed.
While such confession, will reverse the ban,
Since God will not cast off a perfect man.
As he began his speech, he likewise ends ;
No sympathizing word to make amends.
Job is condemned : not perfect is, nor good,
While still the heavenly registration stood ;—
“ A man that's perfect and upright, and one
That feareth God. Like him, on earth there's
none.

He escheweth evil.” This, had Bildad known,
His speech had borne a somewhat milder tone.
But he has cleared his conscience, with delight
That he has dared to probe with all his might :
Nor stooped from rectitude, to condescend
To sympathize with such an erring friend !

CHAPTER XIX.

SELF-DEFENSE.

THE entering wedge that Eliphaz had charged,
Had been driven home by Bildad, now enlarged.
The intimation keen, now downright said,
Pierced deep the father's heart which freshly
bled.

“Cut off for their transgressions! cast away?”
His children! He no more for them could pray.
They'd been a subject of his daily prayer
Since their first breath; and now, no more could
share

His supplications. But no words avail
To lessen grief, or make such memories pale:
No vindication of their character,
Make it appear that innocent they were.
Since sudden death is put as evidence,
No plea is valid in his sons' defense.
Sentence and execution at one stroke!
Signal display, which on their feast-day broke,
Of Divine justice, — for their sins' desert!

His friends' belief, render his words inert :
Hence Job, in his opinion, will repose ;
Without allusion to his childrens' woes :
And in reply to Bildad, open on
Another subject, better dwelt upon ; —
Of the relation which a man sustains
To his Creator. Issue he refrains
To take, at any statement Bildad made ;
But recognizes true all he has said.
“ Be but the premises you've stated true ;
Correct are the conclusions which you drew.
The case is clear, and, Bildad, you are right,
I know it of a truth. 'Tis plain to sight.”
Job now proceeds *his* standard to display ;
The measure which man's character must weigh ;
His standard the pure God ; Him everywhere.
But how shall man with the pure God compare ?
Although by human standard man appear
Noble, without reproach, from error clear,
Surpassing excellent, yet when compared
With Him who never errs ! What man has
dared
To measure with His qualities so pure ?
Whose knowledge, reaching past man's deeds, is
sure

To note the impulse, motive, and design ;
The end and aim, — the plans that intertwine.
With the pure God how shall a man be just ?
Reach the high mark, and be just what he must
To be acquit of error, guilt and blame ?
Who, if his Sovereign calling him by name
Contend, and, at his hand equality
Require, will not show great disparity,
With not an answer that he can command,
One to a thousand ? How shall man then stand ?
For wise in heart He is, mighty in strength.
Thus Job, though weary, argues at full length ;
Discourses on God's great and mighty deeds, —
His power that, finding out, by man, exceeds.
He then breathes out expressions, very clear,
Of consciousness that God Himself is near.
He sees Him not, but knows He's passing by ;
Perceives Him not, yet feels that He is nigh.
But now, again, renews he his complaint.
The man who feels, is none the less a saint.
Thinking his griefs — the error of his day —
Signs of God's anger, he proceeds to say,
“ With such appearance, human help is vain.”
Nor can himself, with words his cause maintain.
So high was God exalted to his mind,

That had he called, God answered, he would find
Himself believing God had meant before
To do what he had asked ; had done no more
Nor different for his supplicating voice.
Yet might he at the harmony rejoice,
Between himself, — the suppliant making call, —
And Him who made, and cares, and feels for all.
But while he speaks of God, no whit abates
The suffering that annoys and irritates.
While he denounces what his friends have said ; —
That 'tis his sins have to misfortune led, —
His wish is not himself to justify
In *all* that he has done. He can descry
Full many a flaw he fain would profit by.
To say " I'm perfect," he declares would prove
Himself perverse. Thus Job refrains to move
One jot or tittle from his self-defense,
And calmly reasons through felt impotence.
Though, to be perfect, he both strove and aimed,
Yet such distinction he at once disclaimed :
Since otherwise, his mouth would him condemn,
And prove his standard low, to him and them.
It would evince that he was satisfied
With lower mark than God had justified.
Whereas, his once ideal now attained,

His now ideal an advance has gained ;
And when is reached by him his sometime goal,
Not as one perfect does he know his soul.
Thus, as a shadow, should one such pursue,
'Twas never reached, yet never out of view.
His ideal mocked him, since it would elude ;
Still be beyond where once it seeming stood.
Having disclaimed perfection as that word
Is understood by man, when said or heard ;
Job now lays down his own hypothesis,
Quite ready to defend it, which is this :
"The perfect and the wicked God destroys."
He has observed it, and he but employs
His power to notice and the facts deduce, —
What other method is of equal use ? —
Slay the scourge swift, God will not intervene
'Twixt it and innocence to come between.
The earth is given, — to him this point is clear, —
To wicked hands. They form the overseer.
The faces of the judges of the earth
He covereth. Their sight is nothing worth.
If He has not done so whither away,
And who is He, and where His place of stay ?
Examples of blind judges were his friends ;
Their blindness but the same sad truth portends.

The guilty *suffer*, but it does not show
That *only* such deep suffering may know.
This, Job declares, to be the one sure base
On which affairs in life find resting-place.
The evil suffer, *and* the good. But still
Evil prevails. It can not be God's will.
By some strange means the rule of earth is
 given
To wicked hands ; nor ruled by powers of heaven.
Job was approaching truth in his own case,
And would develop yet sufficient grace
To know and feel that being so there was
The best of reasons, a most righteous cause.
This knowledge came at last, and then he knew
The fact discovered, and the reason too.
The power to suffer is commensurate
With the capacity,— or less, or great,—
For true delight. They who can feel most bliss,
Know most intensely what deep sorrow is.
The willingness to suffer and endure,
Others to raise to the same standard pure,
Is God's own principle, which self forgets ;
The royal chosen rule that finds no lets
Nor hindrance in the Majesty Divine ;
Whose character and nature both combine

To make complete a perfect ideal One —
 The Origin of Good. Whitherward run,
 As run far rivers toward the boundless sea,
 All who aspire to immortality.

Not wrathful He, not bitter, nor corrupt,
 Though suffering long, slow-angered, — not ab-
 rupt —

Not quick to render like for like to all,
 On good and bad lets daily blessings fall.
 God, thus enduring the sure consequence
 Of Lucifer's rebellion, — his defense
 Of evil, — all resulting in its train,
 And waiting still with patience to refrain
 From meting out to him his just deserts;
 By wooing, winning, tireless love, asserts

His love unequalled.

For the universe

Is Job now used as demonstration terse,
 To prove the problem to a certainty,
 That one may, with his choice and will both
 free,

Choose suffering, rather than consent to sin.
 One sole example will the victory win.
 Job knew it not. His darkness was a need
 To confound Satan, and his silence speed.

Had knowledge of the future life been given,
Satan would straight have said, Job served for
heaven.

Great was the effort needed to attain
This height, by Job, above his griefs and pain ;
To keep his thoughts above misfortunes great,
And dire disease : them, so to concentrate,
As to conduct an argument sublime
On things which shall outlive the things of time.
Which things require, as medium for the mind
The same frail body ; weak, as now we find,—
To give them form, perceptible and plain
To one who wills to see, and seeks to gain
The things that die not ; nor become the less,
Though grasped by many, and the more possess.
Indeed, no other soil can truth e'er find,
In which to thrive, but the immortal mind.
Having announced his thesis, Job now droops.
Beneath the burden physical, he stoops ;
Speaks of himself, and of his days again ;
Would fain forget complaint, yet must complain.
Full many a day he's been in Satan's power,
And weary borne each heavy passing hour.
Full many a sun has risen as brilliantly,
And radiant set, as when prosperity

Had blest his life, and it in halo set.
Memories, he neither can nor would forget :
By which the present contrast marked with
 blight,
Gloams in the darkness of a polar night.
And now another day draws to its close,
While no relief its fading color shows.
His friends sit silent, or in apathy,
Nor comfort Job, who longs for sympathy.
The sunset glow is gone ; the pale twilight
Has faded into blank and sombre night.
And all, save Job, are sunk in quiet sleep.
His hours are spent in sighs and moans, which
 keep
No record of the hours, till breaks the day,
To wake no hope for him ; nor cheer his way.
Hope had been his, that, last of all the three,
Zophar, would silence break with sympathy.
But speaks he not ; hence Job resumes again,
Speaks in his own behalf, despite his pain.
Looks he to God, who knows his life, his pains,
Whose way has caused stagnation in his veins !
He marvels that he came to life at all ;
Or gave not up the ghost at early call.
Assured he was that God knew he was not

Wicked, by will : nor cherished sin in thought.
Prevaricate, should he, he could not hope
To flee God's power ; or think with Him to cope.
Satan was not, and this full well he knew,
Trying Job only. All the trial through,
Aware he was that, to the heart of God,
Job was most dear ; — held worthy of reward.
And he would have accomplished what he
sought,
Had God but intervened His power, and wrought
A cure on Job : or answered but his prayer,
Explaining why the rod He did not spare,
As surely as had he been brought to curse,—
Less cared he for the means, than end — much
worse.
God would that all the truth should feel and
know.
He takes His own best way His truth to show.
Job's ignorance was needed, till 'twas shown
One would do right, from choice of right alone.
Would Job but curse, then Satan would deny
That *any* held a principle more high.
Would Job *not* curse by ills so brought to bear,
God, knowing all, would He but hear Job's
prayer,

And quick decide injustice should be stayed,
Nor longer of himself should be arrayed,
Satan's false statements ; making Him appear
Cruel, vindictive, absent, or austere,—
Then Satan held in readiness to stand
Before the sons of God, with answer bland,—
“Job *would* have cursed, but premature release
Proves Job God's favorite ; any price for peace.
God does not suffer : than himself, no less
Will keep his favorites, so they'll choose to
bless.”

Satan still argues : “What does God require ?
All to be like him. Just this I desire.
He does *His* will, nor suffers, that would I,
I'd do my will, and from all suffering fly.
I will not suffer. Might, it is, makes right.
I have the power. Let all with me unite,
And each shall have the rule,—suffer shall none,
Reap glory, looking out for number one.”
Simple assertion, though the Word of God,
Held no account with Satan. Nowise awed,
He made a bold demand for proof. And why
Job's prayer was long unanswered ; the reply
Is hereby seen. No cause in Job. Nor cause
In God. But by inevitable laws

Which rule and govern conscious sentient mind ;
Which conscious power, being at once combined
With moral freedom ; be such one accused
By one who has his God-given powers abused ;
He must then share God's need to manifest
His character, by the long-suffering test :
Must prove by suffering, suffering's noble power
To conquer wrong, and weaken error's tower.
Hence, then, Job's prayer, though seemingly un-
heard,
Reached God's own heart. He felt it, every
word.

It must needs be. 'Twas meant to testify
And give assurance of God's sympathy,
So long as ever sorrowing sigh be heaved,
Or God's own children feel they are bereaved.

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CHAPTER XX.

A THIRD FRIEND'S EFFORT.

ZOPHAR, as the clear flow of Job's discourse
Fell on his ear, felt he had no resource
From which to draw an argument of power,
The doctrine to refute, which formed Job's tower
Of strong defence: and, as Job did progress,
Felt more and more his entire emptiness.
To speak or not to speak: 'twas this he weighed.
For, failing to reply, it would be laid
To him as tacitly acknowledging
Job vindicated. He must answer bring,
Or Job acquitted stands, and free from guilt;
With character and reputation built.
But Job, he saw, diseased from head to foot!
This was, to him, sufficient proof to put,
That Job, thus suffering, surely guilty is:—
Chained as he was to the hypothesis
Set forth already, which is briefly this:—
They only suffer, who have done amiss:
Who suffer not, good character have built;

While suffering is sure evidence of guilt.
If he replies, he's by a circle bound ;
He can't refute, but must go begging round.
The other two — Job's friends, and friends of
his,—

Hold as substantial this hypothesis.
Age and experience they have, more than he ;
Courage he lacks, therefore decides to be
On their side who have health ; with them to
agree.

While Job is speaking, he with Job believes ;
But still will pin his faith upon their sleeves.
And their expression, as he casts a glance
To read the mind expressed on countenance,
Reveals that they do not abate a whit
Of their opinion, as they've stated it.
Strengthened by them, with perfect self-com-
mand,

He takes a firm and unrelenting stand.
Commences with a question, not profound,
That in his mind has been revolving round.
"Should not the multitude of words,"— profuse
Job probably had seemed to him in use
Of language,— "be answered ?" "And should
a man

Be justified who's full of talk ? and can,
Or should, thy lies make men to hold their
peace ?

And when thou mockest, must all others cease ?
And shall no man make thee ashamed ? ” No
lack

Of zeal is manifest in this attack.

But what a harsh, unfeeling, blunt essay,
Absence of wisdom, wit, and courtesy !

While no reply to Job his words contain,
No answer to the man of grief and pain ;
In Zophar, that there's envy cropping out,
There's scarcely room for shadow of a doubt.

He feels Job's fullness of ability,
To clothe in words his mind's fertility ;
And manifests a conscious lack of tact
To argue well and cause Job to retract.

He came to comfort Job ! but offers prayer
To God, not that his servant Job He'd spare,
But to appear *against* him ! He complained
That Job with firm adherence so maintained
His first position : yet a single point
Makes not, to show Job where he's out of joint
With truth. If he, in Job's speech, could detect
That which was inconsistent, incorrect,

This was the time and place to set him right ;
For truth he might contend ; with words, words
fight.

But easier 'tis to say, than saying prove.
And easy 'tis to run in well-worn groove.
But, lacking proof, it is a weak resort,
To say negation must be proved, and ought
To be. While indolence, content, may hold
A statement true, because it's very old.
But age, as age, can no respect command, —
On firmer basis God's own truth must stand, —
For else might Lucifer make some fair show
To his once claim for genuflection low.
Zophar, adhering to the old, old creed,
Thrusts hard at Job, of courage has no need.
Declares, at hand of God, Job suffers less
Than he deserves. Some sin he should confess.
While he exhorts, blames Job for his desire
The *cause*, of his deep suffering to inquire,
As though himself, being far in the advance,
Could comprehend and see truth at a glance :
Or else were satisfied with but a ray,
And scorned to search for truth's effulgent day.
"Canst thou by searching find out God?" he
asks,

“Canst thou find out the Almighty? Do such
tasks

Bring profit? To perfection, canst thou find
Out, the vast, deep, immeasurable Mind?”
Not less exalted, God, to whom Job prayed;
Than was the God whom Zophar now portrayed.
Nor would Job fain, God’s being, so explore,
So find Him out, that there should be no more
To comprehend.

But God has given His word
That those who early seek shall find the Lord.
The time, when He that knowledge will impart,
Is, when the seeker seeks with all the heart.
Not seeking with the head alone, can show
The same result that head with heart can know.
While having found Him once, there is no more
A limit to His boundless reservoir.
Supply eternal found, for heart and mind,
As all, with Job, who thirsting seek, will find.
And this will be their joy, beyond a doubt,
They may seek ever, never find Him out.
And God, so far from checking this employ,
Bids him make this His glory and His joy,
Who glory would; that he can understand,
Receive and know Him who holds all command.

Having exhorted, Zophar stoops, to wait
What Job will in confession dare relate.
Hoping, perchance, that Job will freely own,
Relieve himself, and let the worst be known.
Toward wealth of goodness, on millennial plane,
Toward highest reach that excellence can gain,
The world is not advanced, the least degree,
By exhortations to integrity :
But by a vital product, in the heart,
Of goodness that, from self, can never part : —
A happy, living spontaneity
To lessen grief, whate'er the cause may be.

CHAPTER XXI.

A VEIN OF IRONY.

WHEN expectation ceases to be met,
Till expectation ceases ; one may get
Accustomed to the lack of that desired,
And rise to higher plane with hope retired ;
Above the range of disappointment's dart :
Not simply self-contained, but, pure in heart,
Containing Him, who will as guest abide
Where welcome meets : — as 'twere, will, side by
side —

Like Enoch, — to companionship be brought,
And walk with God : God's thoughts, by him, be
thought.

Now Job had reached such an exalted tower,
That Zophar, by no means possessed the power
To disappoint him in what he might say.
He might have once, but now had passed that
day.

In all the seven silent days, had one
Some cordial sympathetic act have done,

Some word have said;—could one from his
standpoint

Have viewed his sufferings, and a time appoint
To plead his cause; to his thoughts language
give;

Voicing his words; express, in terms that live,
His ideas for him:—could but one of them
Have been his advocate; one, not condemn;
So, that without an effort of his mind,
They could have led, he followed:—then, so
kind,

And such essential aid, they would have been;—
They would have seemed the friends he trusted in.

That time had past. Not that indifferent
He had become; but disappointment

Could not with keenness now, as at the first,
Break on the sufferer; when, with fresh outburst,
His friends accuse; or, with extravagance,
Assume themselves upon an eminence.

Should pity now, and sympathy, arise,
'Twould gratify him, while it would surprise.

Having his own case plead, and confident
That he was true, and right in his intent,
That this, God knew; thereby, he did attain
A higher life, on more exalted plane

Than that his friends, exulting, occupied :
Could look down on them, candidly decide
The worth and value, — the just estimate
Of their opinions : — rank their worth and
weight.

So much composure, as could be attained
By one from crown to sole diseased and pained ;
Job gathered, and, with patient listening, heard
Zophar's address ; well heeding every word.
But, Zophar ended, all undaunted, he
Relieved himself, in terms of irony.

“No doubt,” he said, “but ye the people are,
And wisdom shall die with you. Near nor far,
When you are gone, shall wisdom more be found !
'Twill be extinct, when you are under ground.
You speak as though all knowledge that can be,
Was in yourselves stored up ; as though you see
All to be seen : as though your minds contain
The sum that all may ever ascertain.

But I can understand, as well as you :
Nor am inferior. What you've said that's true,
Who does not know ?” Then 'gainst them Job
brings charge

Of disrespect, and mockery at large.
They laugh to scorn, not paying the regard

His character could claim. They should discard
Their false ideas; ere this time, have learned
That robbers prosper who the right, have spurned.
They gain their ends: that God, does not, by
force,
Wrest from their grasp, what they gain by wrong
course.

They provoke God; yet they dwell quite secure:
God does not deal direct, with sentence sure,
Meting their ill-desert out with such share
Of evil, as their evil doings dare.
They ought to know, that ill-desert and woes,
Stand not related, as they do suppose,
Each to the other: this they might descry
By the wild beasts, and by the birds that fly.
Creatures of the earth, and fishes of the sea,
Tell there is suffering where no guilt can be.
So God ordains, by His unerring mind,
All souls he holds; the breath of all mankind.
They agitate, as Job thus argues clear.
He calls attention; that they heed and hear
With undivided diligence his speech,
Wait his conclusions, ere they seek to teach.
His friends seem distant, cold. God draws more
near;

To Him Job speaks, conscious that He will hear.
Asks for so much relief that he may use
Able his mental powers, as he would choose.
He thinks himself for errors of his youth
As punished now ; well knowing, that in truth,
His more mature and riper life has been
Renunciation of the ways of sin.
As Job undaunted his own cause defends,
A holy horror seizes his three friends.
By signs they ask that he no more will say,
Lest sudden stroke shall take his life away.
He bids them hold their peace, let him alone
That he may speak, and let what will come on.
They need not give themselves anxiety
Lest he offend pious propriety.
The risk he'll take and bide the consequence.
What he may say will be at his expense.
They only for themselves can be arraigned,
Not for the doctrines by himself maintained.
Producing thus their peace and quiet state,
Job then proceeds himself to vindicate ;
Regards life less than truth. Though God should
 slay,
He will maintain the truth, and his own way.
He longs to close his weary, painful days ;

Doubts where he is who nature's last debt pays.
To be from life forever gone, shut out !
His spirit chills. He has a happy doubt.
The tree cut down, will sprout again and grow.
Man giveth up the ghost, — no more may know ?
If a man die, shall he, too, live again ?
No answer comes, and Job must wait in pain.
He can not think that God should but desire
Man to recall ; His work than which no higher.
And should he in that sleep beneath the ground
But hear His voice, he'd answer at the sound.
He feels life brief ; would fain discover why
He suffers, weary, not allowed to die.
Closing he brings a brief, sad *resumé*
Of pain experienced, and calamity.
But not the slightest thought of cursing God.
Still will he trust Him, though he feels the rod.

CHAPTER XXII.

A SECOND SPEECH FROM ELIPHAZ.

THEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite,
Not doubting that himself was in the right.
Impatient for this opportunity,
He plunges with assured serenity :
Regards Job's speech as hollow and bombast,
And, from his lips, surprising to have passed.
Accuses Job with having cast off fear,
And before God restrained the words of prayer.
Asks him, were he the first one ever born,
Before the hills had he his being's dawn ?
Inquires of Job if he God's secret knows,
Which He has shown, and Job will not disclose.
"With us," he says, "both the grey-headed are,
And men much older than thy father, far."
Asks if God's consolations are so small,
That Job, therefor, will not confess at all ?
With no compassion for Job's suffering state,
To vent in words he does not hesitate.
Naught less than Job's admission of his guilt

Will satisfy. He'll pierce to the sword's hilt,—
If words like swords can pierce, and sure they
may,

Leaving a scar that's slow to wear away.

No stronger proof to him of guilt can be,
Than Job's condition of adversity.

These friends had never thought to search and
see

Whereon was based their creed and theory.

'Twas held most firmly by their choice—their
wills:

Enough, 'twas old. Was *Job* before the hills?

Job's restoration, they had in their mind.

His cause at heart, in vain we seek to find.

And, as in every case, where leads the head,

Keeping in strict abeyance,—as 'twere, dead,—

The heart—which is the fountain-spring of
life—

Satan gains vantage-ground, so here were rife

Peculiar weapons, with which Job to assail;

Satan would conquer by the three friends' flail.

And he might now lie back, and gloat at will;

The Temanite, his work, with equal skill,

Or better than the Adversary's own,

Was pushing on. For it is felt and known

That 'tis more cutting if accused, opposed,
By cherished friends, than by one ill-disposed.
Eliphaz charged Job with restraining prayer !
Was he asleep, absorbed ? not to know there
Had been throughout, in Job's recent reply,
Addresses made to God — true heartfelt cry ?
Perhaps he failed to follow Job, and fled
To ideas running in his o'er-tasked head.
Another charge 'gainst Job he subtly brings ;
Uttering iniquity, and crafty things.
If Eliphaz the first was, to evade
An argument, unanswerable made,
By styling it ingenious, crafty, keen ;
He, not the last, was. Such may now be seen.
Believing Job to be an impious man,
Appearing as religious, only can
Be sign and token of hypocrisy,—
Give evidence how deep in sin, is he.
That men of age, are wise proportionate
Unto their years, he holds as postulate.
That this is false, to him is to be shown ;
Not yet perceived, but time will make it known.
He cruel questions asks, all unaware
Whose cause he has espoused. Himself a snare !
Deems, by this method, Job will yet succumb,

And his confession, easier, thus become.
But he, in haste, had accusation built,
Without demanding certain proof of guilt.
Without relenting he, all undismayed,
To the afflicted Job, straightway portrayed
The case of him, who, stretcheth out his hand
Against the Almighty ; careful to expand
By an allusion to Job's family ;
His sons and daughters, feasting happily.
Those, unripe grapes, shaken from off the vine ;
These, olive-flowers, cast off by wise design.
Thus he maintains, that in the world of time,
Punishment travels on the heels of crime.
That, by misfortune, evil deeds are met ;
That who rebel, such suffering sure must get.
He, by alluding to hypocrisy,
Means, thus depicted, Job himself shall see.
With this he pauses. Waits he now to hear
If Job presumes again himself to clear.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JOB'S REVIEW OF THE SPEECH OF ELIPHAZ.

To speech of Eliphaz Job gave due heed,
Hoping for that which heart or mind might feed.
But only heard reiteration. Told
Again the twice-told tale. Such friends! so
cold!

Were he, in their soul's stead, he said, he could
Against them heap such words;—but never
would.

Instead thereof, he'd bring them strength—re-
lief.

His moving lips should quite assuage their grief.
He mourned that speaking made his grief no
less;

Or, spake he not, no more came happiness.

Speaking, or silent, comes no health, no cheer;
The same dull round wears round the dreary
year.

Job speaks of God, then to Him; alternates,
As he to God or man his statement states.

Bemoans that his condition seems to rise
 As witness up, before his face and eyes ;
 Reviews the attitude people around
 Have taken toward him, solely on this ground.
 What disrespect, with mouth and eye, they've
 played ;
 And on his cheek their hands have rudely laid !
 Reviewing this, with freedom he expands ;
 He is delivered into wicked hands.
 " *God* hath delivered me," sadly he sighs,
 Concludes this must be so, since there arise
 No helping hands to aid in his distress ;
 And from his friends, come words of bitterness !
 He did not understand, to give free play, —
 Full scope,— to creature-will, God must and may
 Withhold results that are His choice ; His will
 Relinquish freely — not at once fulfill
 What He would do had no free will opposed ;
 Had none rebelled ; none free been ill-disposed ;
 Withhold His choice in some specific case.
 That this was needed, action, time, and space,
 To *prove* God's will the soul's best resting-place :
 That though, God's will 'tis best for all to choose,
 On creature-will, with freedom to refuse,
 God can not *force* His will, yet, leave them free.

Freedom and force must antithetic be.

His will, *good*-will, which will, alone makes free,
All who accept it, to eternity.

God can not force His choice, although the best,
And would, accepted, bring joy, peace and rest.

Job, as in figure, so in fact lies low —

In ashes, suffering ; pining truth to know.

Knows not he's dear to the great Sovereign's
heart,

Of whom himself is even counterpart !

That all his ills, and griefs, and trying pain,
Are for promotion of God's glorious reign ;

To convict Satan, bring truth evidence

That must be purchased at such vast expense.

Time passes on. He thought ere this to die ;

But death defers. His friends make no reply.

"The graves are ready, even now, extinct

My days are," he complained.

Spectators winked

As if to say "That's so." Job sees the sign,

And feels that mockers with the crowd com-
bine.

For morbid curiosity a crowd

Had drawn ; to sneer, and jeer, and echo loud

The tales they heard of Job's hypocrisy ;

And thus, annoying, spurn his misery.
 Denouncing them, Job his own course commends,
 Declares that he, who flattereth his friends,
 Shall, in his children, failure have of sight
 Distinctly to discern 'twixt wrong and right.
 Ordained by nature, parents' habits move
 The child's impulses, in the self-same groove.
 Hence, in the parent, power perverted proves
 A variation of the proper grooves.
 Transmitted faculty, reduced in power,
 Becomes in children poor paternal dower.
 Thus father's sins, on children visited,
 Are doomed, by father, on the children's head.
 Not curse of God. But by Him plainly told,
 In the one Book that age doth not make old.
 In truth's behalf Job begs his friends to make
 A review of their premises, and take
 Into consideration of the theme
 The view of things, as from his point they seem.
 For, not one wise among them can he find ;
 If such they are, he's sure they'll change their
 mind
 Assured, while troubled Job his speech thus ends.
 And to his friends his own sad case commends.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BILDAD'S SECOND SPEECH.

ETIQUETTE now to Bildad next gives place ;
And promptly he, with very little grace
Proceeded. Sad deficiency he showed
In love that will an ill report explode.
The words of Job, compassion moving not,
Took antithetic form, and callous wrought.
He felt Job's censure, and sent bounding back,
Reply he hoped Job would not dare attack.
For he had hoped, if Eliphaz should fail
Job to convict, his words might so avail
As Job to silence. Bids him never hope
To silence them, or with their logic cope.
Oft as he speaks, so oft they'll answer give,
And this will last as long as he shall live.
So much for prelude. Now he'll undertake
Job to review, and a reply to make.
As beasts he charges Job with counting them.
Which charge, by signs, Job does at once con-
demn.

Because, as men he does not hold them wise ;
It does not rank them beasts before his eyes.
Bildad mistakes the signs, and half aloud,
With gesture he addresses now the crowd :
Speaks *at Job to* the witnesses around,
Who watch to find who best will hold his ground.
Bids them to note Job's anger ! Then, as though
No change their firm opinion e'er could know,
Asks Job, for him, if the earth shall be left,
Or rock removed, because he is bereft.
Enlarges on the trap, the snare, and all
The evils that the wicked shall befall.
Nor aught has he in closing else to say,
Than suffering of the wicked to portray.
He has no word of comfort to impart,
But means that Job shall lay the whole to heart.

CHAPTER XXV.

JOB SUPERIOR TO BILDAD.

A PRIEST, who ministers in sacred things,
Who, to the service, health and vigor brings,
Will find, if calumny its foul breath throw
Upon his name, 'twill bring his spirits low.
'Twill enervate, and bear upon its train
Mental disturbance, and disabling pain.
All of which troubles tend to quite unfit
For office-work, and for enjoying it.
But Job, already sick, bowed down with grief,
Calumniously is charged, without relief:
Faced down against all statements he can make;
No evidence produced by those who take
Against him.
Twice has Bildad asked. "How long?" —
In each address. Listless as to a song,
To what Job utters. End, is what he seeks; —
That Job be silenced; not the last who speaks.
Job, in reply, quotation from him makes,
Inquires, "How long will ye my soul thus vex?"

In asking Job, "How long shall vain words be?"

Bildad, in speaking, used the plural *ye*.

As though, alone, Job were himself, a host;

At least, himself might so presume to boast.

For, had Job had one sympathizing friend,

It would have been disclosed before the end.

Job's friends bring censures, and the same re-
peat;

Then, waiting, wrap themselves in self-conceit.

No charge specific, against him they bring;

Yet hope their course will his confession wring.

While Job, admitting "God hath overthrown;"

Declares, that out of wrong, he cries alone.

Unable to discern the reason why,

He feels of glory stripped, of dignity.

All his afflictions are, by Job, believed

Directly from the hand of God, received.

Most keen, he felt estrangement of his friends:

No servant to his call, an answer sends.

Entreaty naught availed: nor came his wife,

Besought by memory of their children's life.

Young children scorn him, when they see him
rise;

And treasured friends, cast on him, evil eyes.

He sighs for pity: wishes that a book,

With iron pen, whereon all eyes might look,
Were written : graven in the rock with lead,
That ever might be read, what he had said.
Then might fair argument be made out clear,
And right, and righteousness, in truth appear.
Job's prayer reached heaven, his words, though
not engraved

Upon a rock, had record, and are saved.
Now, heaven, to Job, its consolation sends ;
Assurance that can not be moved by friends.
Belief that some one lives who will redeem :
That, in his flesh restored, to him shall seem
Upon the earth to stand, at latter day :
That, in his flesh, God shall Himself, display.
'Twas not by force of logic, Job attained
This height sublime, this calm assurance gained.
Noble result it is, of God's great power,
Which can the intellect quite overtower :
Dispensing with the logic of the mind,
Can unseal eyes that, otherwise, were blind :
The truth, within the domain of the heart,
Can, without mental logic, clear impart ;
As sure, as truth by intellect received,
Waits process logical, to be believed.
(This truth by Paul, the apostle, is rehearsed,

Who, in the highest lore, was amply versed*.)
Job shows his friends, warming in his address,
A better method than they now possess.
He was not irreligious, they should know.
They should acknowledge this. It being so,
“Why persecute him?” This, they ought to
say,
And their attention turn another way.
Their present attitude to him, and toward,
Should make them fear the judgment of the
sword.
Job, speaking thus, exhibits power to rise
Above things gross, which meet the mortal eyes ;
Buoyed up by hope, though weak and desolate,
Does not retract, will not prevaricate.
But while he speaks, impatience meets his eyes,
One waves his hand and makes attempt to rise.

* Eph. iii. 19.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN INTERRUPTION.

ZOPHAR now interrupts. He can not wait
 To hear from Job all that he has to state :
 Relucting first,—when came his former turn,—
 Now cannot wait : his thoughts within him burn.
 Hence he breaks in with this apology :
 “Therefore my thoughts cause me to answer
 thee ;
 And for this I make haste.” *My* thoughts (we
 call
 Digested thoughts our own, original).
 Zophar, the others’ thoughts, could now con-
 dense,
 And fairly make a point :— an inference.
 He seems to think if Job will only wait,
 He can produce a certain sure checkmate.
 The check of his reproach, has prominence,
 Which he received from Job. He, in defense,
 The spirit of his understanding, pleads,
 Prompting his speech, which prompting he must
 needs

Obey.

The charge, from Job, of mockery,
Zophar so chafed, that nearly deaf was he
To speech of Job. Its excellences, quite
Were lost and hidden from his inner sight.
Now he conceived his thoughts pellucid ran :
Asked, "Does not Job know that since first was
man

Placed on the earth, the triumph is but short
Of wicked men?" He brings in no new
thought;

But speaks of joy the hypocrite obtains,—
Its brevity ; although a name he gains
For excellency ; mounting as heaven high,
His head, beyond the clouds, up to the sky.
Thus, recognizing that Job's family
Held high position,— standing socially.
This, as an abstract truth, he'd have applied
Concretely, by Job's conscience terrified.
He saw it clear. 'Twas evident to all :
Job had stood high, proportionate his fall.
Some hidden sin there was, to which Job clung,
And rolled as morsel sweet under his tongue.
By such insinuation, he has thought,
Job, to confession, may be urged and brought.

In closing, states what surely shall befall
The hypocrite. That, more or less, this all
The portion is to wicked men, from God.
This is his heritage : this his reward.
'Tis tantamount to saying, all at once,
“ This, Job, is your reward ; — inheritance.”
Relieved by speech, he fancies this the end,
That Job will say no more ; no more contend.

CHAPTER XXVII.

JOB RESUMES.

IT is most true, no novice may conclude
Whether the work produced by him is good :
Or what result, the work produced will bring,
Or whether it result in any thing.
Zophar, relieved of what he had in store,
Better prepared to listen than before,
In his conceit, imagines that his speech,
Will silence Job till he the point shall reach
Of free confession, open, full and frank :
That then, restored to health, Zophar he'll thank !
His speech had interrupted Job, 'tis true :
But Job had spoke so long, he'd reason to
Break in. So it to Zophar must have seemed,
Or, waiting still, he wisdom would have deemed.
But, Zophar ended, Job resumes, and first
Alludes to that which, interrupting, burst
From Zophar's lips : anticipates that more
May interrupt, ere his discourse is o'er.
Entreats, they hear with diligence, his speech :

Wait till he's through, ere they attempt to teach.
That then, this may their consolation be,
They can again resume their mockery.
On Zophar, he no barrier or restraint
Would interpose, to hinder or prevent
The full and free expression of his mind,
Although it might be cutting or unkind.
'Twere bad, to have them groundlessly accuse ;
'Twas worse, if friends held back deceit to use.
This admonition given, by Zophar caused,
Job now resumes, as though he had but paused.
The subject-matter, in his mind before,
Discusses ; varied, doubtless, somewhat more.
Complains he not to man : although men may,
Being present, hear what he feels moved to say.
Asks, if complaint of his, to them were made,
Why should he not be troubled and afraid ?
Did they afford him aught, that he should more
Be cheered, encouraged, strengthened, than
before ?
"Mark me, and be astonished," he contends.
They'll interrupt again, he apprehends ;
Hence, bids them on their mouth to lay their
hand,
And in position keep respectful stand.

His memory, reproducing scenes afresh,
Brings trembling agitation to his flesh,
Which, would they mark with ready, open mind,
As he rehearses, one result must find.
Candid attention must arrive at this,
Relinquishment of their hypothesis :
Since well-known facts, have power to dispossess
Them of the theory, they still confess.
Then Job proceeds, amply to multiply
Proofs that his own position justify.
Facial expressions, plainly manifest
To Job, the thoughts his friends hold unex-
pressed,
Which, he declares to them, he reads ; and knows
The wrong devices, which, themselves oppose
Against him. They are ready, all, to say
“The wicked, who are prospering to-day,
Are but reserved : destruction will waylay
And overtake them. They shall be brought forth
And reap experience of a day of wrath.”
“But who,” he asks, “ will meet such on the way,
And to his face your argument will lay ?
Who shall repay him for what he hath done ?
No one will dare to face him ! he’ll pass on
Till to the grave he’s brought, — no joy made
dim, —

Then sweet the valley clods shall be to him.
How can your answers to me comfort bring,
Since falsehoods linger in your answering ?”
Job pauses, thinking that an angry God
Distributes sorrows in His wrath abroad.
His sad experiences, have made him feel
That God does not, strict compensation, deal.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A THIRD SPEECH FROM ELIPHAZ.

Now Eliphaz the truth would fain defend ;
But argument with him is at an end.
Surprised, he sees Job rise above his pain
His views to argue, and his cause maintain.
The Temanite, since he can not deny
The wicked, sometimes prosper, till they die, —
Evades the subject, and inquiry makes.
Of things most deep, the thought, he brings,
partakes.

“Has God more pleasure, has He any gain,
If thou art righteous ? if thy life attain
Perfection ?”

Now God's character is brought
To our attention. Following not their thought
Who early groped without the gospel light,
We answer Eliphaz ; — Christ, giving sight.
God doth have pleasure, when His works progress
In ways that He ordained, and loves to bless.
Not less than human, God has joy : and gain

Brings home to heaven; when men like Job
attain

Perfection. God, this truth has verified
By His incarnate Son who lived and died * —
And rose again! All glory to His name!
Let love, like His, all conscious life inflame.
Eliphaz wishes Job to understand
That God dispenses judgment, nor will stand
In fear. That He, no argument, will bring: —
He thought God would not stoop to reasoning.
This third attempt, he is resolved, shall wring
From Job confession: — the specific thing.
And he will plunge with keen, outspoken talk,
Job must be guilty though he says they mock.
Hence he proceeds, specific sins, to state:
“Thy wickedness,” he asks, “is it not great?”
Charging, on Job, commission of each deed!
Bids him acknowledge all, that he be freed
From all his ills. If he would but return
To the Almighty, he would justly earn,
And lay up, gold, as dust. Silver and gold,
Should have in plenty. He moreover told
Job, he’d enjoy religious services;
Would plan, and carry out his purposes.

* Luke xv. 7.

Be better able, those cast down, to cheer,
By citing his own case : make it appear
How he once fell from rectitude ; and then
Returned to right, and found relief from pain :
Could show the humble ones, in coming days,
Light that would shine, — did Job but mend his
ways.

He would have peace, and this, a rich reward ;
Would he but now acquaint himself with God.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE REPLY TO ELIPHAZ.

IF Job's three friends, had shadow of a doubt
That they were right, but dare not let it out ;
Lest, if they owned they favored Job's belief,
They were in duty bound to bring relief ;—
To bring him, from their store, some kindly aid ;
See, for his losses, reparation made ;
Then, doubly wrong and cruel was their way,
And they were guilty of hypocrisy.
But since the Book does not make this appear,
'Tis charity to hold they were sincere :
That they believed Job erring, and their aim
Was, to restore : — from error to reclaim .
The third address of Eliphaz, was more
Sharp and severe, than all he'd said before.
Then Job replied to Eliphaz, and said,
“ Even to-day, is my complaint with dread
And bitter filled. And though I weep and moan,
The stroke I bear, is heavier than my groan.
With God, you bid me, myself to acquaint.

'Tis my desire ; burden of my complaint.
Oh that I knew where I might find Him." Then
Job pictured the delight, he would have, when
In such a nearness he could bring his cause,
Present his arguments, then, waiting, pause
And know the answer the Most High would
give.

Assured he felt that not a negative, —
A force against him would be his great power ;
That He would strengthen him, hour after hour.
That there the righteous ever might dispute,
And none the verdict ever should refute.
But, much as Job desired nearness to God,
He found Him not, above, around, abroad !
Search toward the left, did no success betide,
Upon the right completely God did hide.
Still, consolation from this fact, Job drew :
The way *he* took, the omniscient God, well knew.
Divine assurance came, which could uphold.
He knew, when tried, he should come forth like
gold.

When Job his life in light of God reviewed,
He felt he had not swerved from rectitude.
No wilful deviation had he made,
To cause the suffering thus upon him laid.

He had kept God's commands. God's words, so
good,
To him were more than necessary food.
But though, by thoughts like these, Job was sus-
tained,
His suffering was no less ; more was he pained
That since God's words to him were very dear,
God's way and mind toward him should be severe.
He felt he had no power to change God's mind ;
Knew what God's soul desired, a way he'd find
To do. Therefore, he wished he could have died
Before this darkness had his spirit tried.
Job shows the way the selfish take to please
Themselves, — to enrich their store. How they
will seize,
Without remorse, from widows, orphans, food ;
Regardless all, of aught but their own good.
The poor must press *their* vine, and make *their*
oil,
While suffering thirst, and weary from their toil.
These poor, Job sees, to groan ; their souls to cry,
Yet visitation comes not from on high.
He sees oppressors sin against the light,
They care not to discriminate the right.
And many other wrongs hold a bold front

And none the living actors dare confront.
Because in station they stand very high,
No justice meets them till the day they die.
Exalted while they live, and then brought low
Like tops of corn that healthily did grow, —
So quick, and quiet cut, do these men die.
Job asks for proof if he be said to lie ;
Challenges them to make his speech appear
As nothing worth ; then waits from them to hear.

CHAPTER XXX.

BILDAD'S LAST EFFORT.

BILDAD, on whom reply to Job devolves,
Evades the question, and himself absolves
From giving answer ; not in any wise
Does he discuss their expressed theories.
Of Job's last question, he no notice takes,
And brief indeed the speech is that he makes.
Job stated facts, then asked who would appear
And show his statements false. The way was
clear
And open to them. Now they might proceed
And argue on till truth appeared indeed.
Job had a right from Bildad to expect
An answer to his question, made direct.
Instead thereof, as though he had not heard,
But, roused from meditation spoke the word
Upon his mind — beholding discord here —
Reverting, says, “ Dominion are and fear
In His high places ; there He maketh peace,
The number of His armies, can it cease ?

And upon whom doth not His light arise?
His light that travels ceaseless through the skies.
How then can man be justified with God?"
A strange transition reason seems abroad.
Is he oblivious? Is his mind o'erthrown?
Beyond his depth the theme he's thought upon?
In foregoing sentences, 'twere hard to find
A premise, and a consequent combined.
Brief is his speech, contracted his reply,
Who had complained of Job's verbosity.
Who, previously, had proudly boasted they
Would speak, when Job had said all he could say.
Now not two minutes can he speech command,
Nor furnish ideas language may expand!
One might conjecture, without strain of mind,
That in Job's speech, Bildad did somewhere find
An illustration of himself, so made,
That he with the low worm did seem to grade.
And, since not natural it is to think
That one will do from what one's self would
shrink;
The charges brought by Job's three friends, may
be
Reflected guilt, from which they were not free.
Shadows they cast on their own characters;

And friendships pale that should seem luminous.
Make such appear a bare and empty name,
To which they had no title, right or claim.
Marred is the beauty, and the harmony,
That might have linked their names with memory.
It marks, precarious, friendship's strongest boast
When riches fail, and influence is lost.
Err as they may, Job's three friends never cease
To wish themselves and him with God, at peace.
Bildad attention called to God's domain,
His power, and fear,— the peace He will sustain
In His high places, thinking it God's way
Peace to enforce, by strong and stringent sway.
By potent power,— force absolute,— coerce
Concord and peace, throughout the universe!
Not knowing that long-suffering, patient love
Is most efficient in the realm above.
A marvel to him thus his thinking wrought,
That Job, ere this, was not to silence brought.
In his confusion, Bildad thinks, may be
That Job is silenced now. He'll pause and see.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MIND TRIUMPHS OVER MATTER.

Job, suffering as he is, with grief and pain,
Is blest in this,— the clearness of his brain.
This Satan's limit was ; not to dethrone
Job's reason. Let his intellect alone.
Now Job saw plainly Bildad's wits were out.
He had not aimed to raise a single doubt.
Nor made e'en slight allusion to Job's speech ; —
It evidently was beyond his reach.
But, incoherent as a man who dreams,
Illogical and wandering, so he seems.
Job sees the matter simply ludicrous.
That this is all his speech, and ended thus !
Though wrecked, bereft, accused, condemned, in
 pain,
He feels of irony a lively vein.
All Satan's power has been of no avail
To make him curse, or ever once to fail
To utter truth : — even in sorest grief,
Or while friends censure — of temptations, chief.

Satan knew this, and sharply urged them on :
Failed they his end, then his last weapon's gone.
Now Job will show, by contrast, what will feed
A sorrowing man, of sympathy in need ;
As thus, sarcastic, he the subject treats :
Showing that Bildad's speech its end defeats.
"How hast thou helped him that is without
power !
How finds in thee, the strengthless arm, a tower !
How hast thou counselled, how appeared as
wise !—
The thing declared most fully, as it lies !
To whom hast thou addressed these words ?
From thee,
Whose spirit came ? Thou must a medium be !"
No more of sarcasm. Bildad's speech retires,
And higher Power the speaker's mind inspires :
The while, discoursing, he his knowledge brings,
Concerning God, and God-created things :
Amplly expanding on the works of God
Seen in the heavens, and spread in earth abroad :
His mighty power, His understanding wide,
Who governs all, and smites the man of pride.
Now Job, addressing wise men, makes demand,
"Who can explain God's power ? who under-
stand ?"

He pauses. All are hushed. All babblings
cease.

“Acquaint thyself with Him, and be at peace.”

Thus Eliphaz, advising Job, had said.

Spectators waiting, view him as the head :

He took the lead. But, plainly, Job has showed

He had some knowledge : knew, at least, the
road.

The question stated ; Job awaits reply ;

But gains no answer. Day and night pass by.

The morning came, and none the silence broke.

Then Job resumed. First, of their silence
spoke.

Or, rather, made allusion, that bespoke

Their candid thought : but takes a higher range.

Declares he will not his assertion change.

True as God lives, He will not use deceit

To make his health and happiness complete.

Though judgment be denied, he will not say

That he is suffering for some evil way.

To win their favor, never will admit

Their system may be right : — thus sanction it.

Asks what reward the hypocrite can gain ?

Will *he* delight in God ? or when in pain,

Call upon Him ? Conscience, in such, must make

Corroding guilt consume ; sleep they, or wake.
 And, after life, their influence will extend
 On, onward still. None may predict the end !
 There's no inducement, he perceives, to lead
 To choice of wicked life, in word or deed.
 Having drawn this conclusion, Job's thoughts
 turn

To earth's choice riches ; and the way to earn,—
 Or to obtain them : shows he has acquired
 Extensive knowledge, much to be desired.

Such knowledge, man, to wealth material,
 brings ;

Lured by the glamour of earth's transient things.
 "But where," he asks, "shall wisdom true, be
 found ?

The place of understanding, deep and sound ?

Were it an article produced for sale,
 On prices current, never found to fail,
 Had value mercantile, that sometimes could
 Command a premium, in market good ;
 Could it for silver, onyx stones, or gold,
 For crystals be, coral, pearls, rubies, sold ;
 Compare with Ophir's gold, or jewels fine,
 Topaz of Ethiopia's lustrous shrine ; —
 Par value with these, had true wisdom, then

True wisdom had been prized and sought by
men."

Wisdom, that's precious beyond gold and gem,
Job shows his friends, is not possessed by them.
Of this they're conscious, as their silence shows;
"Whence comes it then? Who shall its path
disclose?

God understandeth; knows the way and place:
Looketh the earth o'er, beneath heaven's broad
space,

To make weight for the winds, the waters weigh,
Decree the rain, and mark the lightning's play.
He, said to man, who made material things,—
To normal action, nature's forces brings,—
"Behold, this wisdom is, the LORD to fear;
Evil to shun, is understanding clear."

Here, Job perceives, supreme intelligence
Was needed, to adjust, and so dispense
Matter, that no collision should take place
Among the countless orbs that float in space.
Infinite wisdom, to adapt and fit
Supply to want, and to continue it
In operation, as the ages roll:—
Subject for thought, to every thinking soul.
Here wisdom is, was stored up years ago

By the Creator, All-wise, who must know
 All that man can acquire : holds, in His mind,
 Much more than seeking man can ever find.
 But wisdom comes to him on higher plane,
 Who does, of things unseen, assurance gain :
 Has, of God's presence, living consciousness ;
 Lives in His love, and lives, like Him, to bless :
 Consoled, when darkness seems to overflow ; —
 Peace in possession, whispering, "God doth
 know."

Here Job gave pause. Could his three friends
 complain

He lacked acquaintance, or advise again
 That he, with God, should make himself ac-
 quaint ?

They, how to criticise, to make complaint,
 To give advice, to accuse and irritate,
 Invent, conjecture, underestimate,
 Know perfectly. But could they come more
 near,
 And lead to God ?

Unready they appear.

They may apologise, if so they will,
 But, silent they : of same opinion still !
 Hence Job resumes, showing the train of thought

That, during pause, his mind in silence wrought.
Thoughts of God's knowledge, — of the wind
and rain, —

Bring to Job's mind, his losses and his pain.

“Oh that I were as in the months now sped,
When God preserved me. When upon my head
His candle shined.”

Then fully, Job reviewed
His life entire ; his aim at rectitude :
The gratitude and honor he received.
How sought his judgment was, his word be-
lieved.
His simple name — how it brought blessings
down ;
His ready aid, had changed to smiles, the frown.
He, 'mongst the people sat, as chief and king ;
Comfort, to mourners, his delight to bring.
In honest candor this he could aver,
Describing his official character.
So, and still more, does Job rehearse his joy,
And honor meeting him without alloy.
But now so strange and sad a change he meets !
Misfortune's blight ! No one, with honor, greets !
Those younger than himself, deride and mock,
Whose fathers, less than dogs that watch his
flock,

Did he esteem. And men degraded too,
Who from him then had hid, now crept to view,
To jeer with rhymes and songs, and in his face,
To spit; and thus themselves and him, disgrace.
Job felt that in himself, lay not the cause
Of such ill-treatment by such vile outlaws.
They who, when he had ruled, from justice fled,
Returned, to charge it fell on his own head.
To intimate that he, no less had been,
Than they, in walking in the ways of sin.
Forward they set his sad and mournful state.
Sought the last news to hear, and to relate :
And, what they hoped would come, to prophesy.
Nor were they few; a crowd came rushing by,
As though the prison doors were open thrown,
They surged, and swayed where, they would not,
alone,
In Job's supremacy, have dared to be.
While now, their story's plausibility,
United with the charges of his friends,
Completely served their mean, ignoble ends.
Satan, they served, of their own free accord ;
He meant, that Job thereby should curse the
Lord.
The charges 'gainst his character, so brought,

Banished, awhile, Job's sickness from his thought.
His mind is now entirely occupied,
With the idea that he's so belied.
That, who should vindicate, continue still
To hold that, for his sins, he bears all ill.
Virtue, can not its own reward well be,
When it's exposed to bold, cold calumny.
The consciousness of his own virtue, made
Job keenly sensitive to the tirade
Of these low men whose lips were too impure
To speak his name. Yet this he must endure.
A mote, that hits the eye, will pain and harm
More than a heavy blow upon the palm.
Indifferent, he can't be that they defame ;
To him are precious, character and name.
Job turns his eyes upon his present state,
And sees that dreary terrors on him wait,
That they, as stormy wind, pursue his soul :
Above, wild clouds, beneath him, billows roll.
Harrassed he is, to the extremest verge.
Powers, seen and unseen, ceaseless in their surge.
Still he believes in God, to him he cries.
No answer comes. Still, on Him, Job relies.
He earnest calls. God does not seem to hear.
Rising, he stands. No reverence brings him
near.

“Cruel, thou art become to me,” he cries: —
Prayer insincere, from him, can not arise.
He, thinking God his substance doth dissolve,
Concludes that He doth on his death resolve.
A lingering hope he has, that, when life’s flown,
His just repute may clearly be made known.
Though evil men for his destruction cry,
Truth then, *may* rise and solve the mystery.
He speaks of tears, that he for others shed,
When sorrows fell upon a mourner’s head.
Can not but grieve that when he looked for light,
A gloom should meet him, dark, as darkest night.
He looks upon himself; his skin grown black;
His fleshless bones feverish fires attack.
To owls and dragons, seems related more
Than to the human form that once he wore.
The harp, that once accompanied his voice,
Unstrung, is mourning: — can’t alone, rejoice.
He finds no place for song. His vocal powers
Resound with weeping through the dreary hours.
And now he turns from his disease and pain,
His character to vindicate again;
Regards this affirmation, probably
As his last statement, of himself, to be.
His deposition; — which he now, will dare,

As on death's verge, solemnly to declare :
When from hypocrisy could be no gain,
When life is waning, closing out with pain.
This stand he takes, as a memorial —
That when his name shall be historial
It may be proved, that one can righteous be
And suffer evil to the last degree.
Now, as on oath before the God, Most-High.
Conscious of him ; of His all-seeing eye ;
No hope of life ; no wish death to defer ;
Job makes his last defense of character.
From selfish thought quite free. The thought,
 of pain
Dismissing ; and his failure to obtain
From any source, from any woe, relief ;
Sublime he mounts above, looks down on grief !
Posture uneasy cannot move him now,
Nor turn his thought, or make his spirit bow.
He makes himself the object of his view,
Gives his past life a candid, calm review.
As sun, above the clouds, looks shining down,
While earth lies drenched beneath the low
 cloud's frown ;
So, as the sun, was his unclouded mind :
As earth, the body that disease did bind.

Thus mind, triumphant over matter, gains
Ascendance, and the victory obtains.

Conscious of God and righteousness his own,
The charges, brought against him, one by one,
Job takes :— those simply from conjecture
drawn,

The accuser thinking, possibly he'd done ;
And, charges brought, because that, probably,
The accuser, conscious was, of guilt to be ;
Or, of susceptibility aware,

To sin, if in his path lay such a snare.

Charges by those who came o'er him to gloat,
And every charge they heard, to set afloat,
And retail, piecemeal, wholesale slanders heard ;
Dwelling minutely on the most absurd ;
With their additions, and their private views,
That nothing might be lost in passing news.

All which the malice or sagacity
Of Satan could concoct or cause to be
Suggested and infused into the minds
Of friends and foes. These charges, all, Job
finds

And holds them up, proceeding to deny,
And self defend from all their calumny.
Having already, as a magistrate,

His character defended, he will state
His private life, and lay his motives bare
To their inspection : freely give them air.
The first charge, he, with emphasis, denies.
From such a life, no blessing could arise ;
It had no sanction by the living God :
Without inheritance, without reward.
Such, to destruction and strange punishment,
Are travelling on to meet self-banishment.
Such course of life, the Most High God would
 see,
Whose approbation felt, was more than the
Opinion mortal man might hold ; and though
They failed to see him pure, God knew him so.
Deceit and vanity, he next denies :
Would, that an even balance might arise,
His motives and his conduct so to weigh,
That God might know of his integrity.
Thus, calling God to witness,— who must know,
Confirms his statements, as by oath to show.
With equal candor, straightway Job proceeds,
Guilt to deny concerning sensual deeds.
If to such wrong his life has testified,
He dares invoke still more of sorrow's tide.
Even the alienation of his wife,

The joy and partner of his happy life.
He recognises that this heinous crime
Has its desert ; its punishment in time.
Then passes on, as pure, to vindicate
Himself, as master of his home estate.
No one, of all who served him in his house,
Had sought, in vain, his sympathy to rouse.
Each servant knew he would defend the right,
Nor let the weak be overcome by might.
The law, impressed upon the human mind,
He used, himself and his whole house, to bind.
The golden rule, which is so aptly known,
Bidding each make the other's case, his own.
This was Job's regulator in his life,
This ended tumults, feuds, and household strife.
It had been charged that he oppressed the poor,
Widow and orphan had turned from his door.
Instead of which, they'd been peculiar charge,
Favors on whom, he did delight to enlarge.
Which, to affirm, Job, vengeance dares to call :
If this be false, let from its socket fall
His arm ; — be broken from its bone. Because
He felt, how right the terror of God's laws.
That God would have the right him to destroy,
Failed he, of right, to one in his employ.

Next, he denies idolatry of gold : —

Exulting, on account of wealth untold.

Also, idolatry of sun and moon.

Not morning's beams, nor sunset's hues, nor
noon,

When in high majesty it stood as king,

Had found his heart the sun as worshipping.

Nor, when the paler lunar power had sailed

Softly through floating clouds, and partly veiled ;

Though, at such times his mouth had kissed his
hand,

And waved it high, yet did his heart expand

To higher Light, and reverent worship bring

To God the Lord, his Sovereign and his King.

Or, otherwise, he would the Lord deny,

And merit judgment for idolatry.

With such self-searching, did Job analyze

His character, and fully he denies

The accusations which he has reviewed ;

Before himself and God, acquitted stood.

Still Job enlarges on his hopes and fears,

And his experiences of former years.

Then, weary with rehearsal, sadly sighs,

That the Almighty would but make replies :

His adversary cause a written book

Of accusations, wherein all might look,
To be produced. He would, that book put down,
Take up and wear — a diadem and crown.
Sure, in a princely way, he could maintain
His own defence ; and royal honor gain.
(This, in parenthesis, by pain borne down ;
And every face a sneer, or scoff, or frown.)
But suddenly occurs another charge.
His borders, never sought he to enlarge —
More land to gain, by measures false or wrong ;
If he had eaten fruit thereof, and long
Unpaid the laborer ; or, had failed to pay ;
Had fraudulently dealt in any way ;
Called he for thistles, and for cockles' growth,
Where wheat and barley grew in beauty, both.
No more had he to say, but to append,
That, simply, here the words of Job have end.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A NEW SPEAKER.

To Zophar, now, all look for his reply.
Profoundly silent pass the moments by.
Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar,— all are mute.
Who shall explain why they no more dispute ?
Had stubbornness a mingling in the cause ?
Does self-complacence, thus produce a pause ?
Does ground, once taken, pride forbid to yield ? —
Sure that, being prosperous, they can hold the
field ?
Since pain proves guilt, clearly, they're not in
sin,—
They've won the victory ! Those may laugh,
who win.
Accounts this for the silence they maintain ?
Or, has Job's argument seemed right and plain,
And they are silenced since they can't refute ?—
For lack of courage to admit, keep mute.
Or, are they horrified that Job should dare
Invoke more evil than he now does bear ?

Amazed, that he, with all his woes and pain,
Still, boldly, dare his righteousness maintain?
Hence, silent wait, expecting there will fall
Some stroke of vengeance, that will Job appal.
There was another who was waiting, too:
And had been waiting, many speeches through.
And he was young, ruddy, perchance, withal;
With buoyant spirits, coming without call.
He looked at Job, when Job the speaker was,
And at Job's friends, when they maintained their
cause.

Seemed it to him, when bridling hard his tongue,
A serious disadvantage to be young.
Doubtless, from Job, he wisdom had received;
Been told to trust in God, nor be deceived
By what one man, or many men, might say;
Nor loving service ever fail to pay:
Always, and everywhere, defend His cause;
Stand in His fear, and keep His righteous laws:
The truth to vindicate, in all he said,
Then stand erect, God's blessing on his head.
Long time, this youth, had longed to take a part.
His plethoric brain, and overburdened heart,
Could scarce sustain the weight of such a load;
But age demanded, he must yield the road.

The barrier ceases now. They pause. And he
May speak, without offense to courtesy.
Rising, with swelling chest, and glowing eyes,
With ardent zeal that all defeat defies,
With firm belief in God as wise and good, —
In His complete and perfect rectitude ;
Because that Job himself had justified
Rather than God, this young man did decide
That he was right indignant Job to view ;
Hence, kindred was, the wrath of Elihu.
For if, indeed, Job was entirely right,
Then God was wrong ! No reverence could incite
Worshipful love, to one dispensing wrong —
In whom, all confidence, could not belong.
God, if not worthy of implicit trust,
It were impossible, though told he must,
To love and serve. Robbed of his God, was he !
Hence 'twas, that Elihu indignantly
Addressed himself to Job. All Job had said
About himself, — the righteous life he'd led, —
Doubtless, as truth, by Elihu was received.
For he, the next to God, in Job believed.
No counter-evidence had been adduced,
None even circumstantially produced ;
And yet, his three friends still persisted, in

Accusing him of wilful, perverse sin.
And this, the wrath of Elihu, inflamed ;
That, without proof they, constantly, Job blamed :
Charged him as though they positively knew
The crimes they charged him with, were witnessed to.

With modest prelude, Elihu began,
As giving vent, his words most freely ran.
"I'm young," he said, "and ye are very old,
I, my opinion, therefor, did withhold.
I stood in fear, my thoughts, to you to show,
Thinking, within myself, that ye must know.
I said that days should speak, and multitude
Of years teach wisdom." Now the magnitude
Of his anticipations, brought rebound,
Equaled by him in disappointment found.
But he a quite important truth describes, —
One may be aged, without being wise ;
Also, that there a spirit is, in man,
Inspirable, and that the Almighty can
By inspiration, understanding give ;
Depending not on length of days, men live,
But on a willingness to know the truth :
Nor age, is more inspirable than youth.
Therefore, great men are neither always wise,

Nor, in the aged, understanding lies.

“Wherefore, for this,” continued Elihu,

“I said, hear me, and let me give my view,”

(The speaker changes straight from person third,

To person first, in what was said and heard :

Giving a sure and quite conclusive look,

That Elihu, author was, of Job, the book.)

“For take you note,” he adds, “I gave due heed,

Watching your reasons as you did proceed.

I waited for your words, in your delay,

While ye were searching out what ye should say.

Earnest attention gave I you. Behold,

None of you Job convinced, though ye are old.

Lest ye should say, “we wisdom have found

out;

God thrusts him down, not man; without a

doubt.

Job still stands upright in integrity.

Ye have not crushed him in the least degree.

Now Job hath not addressed himself to me,

Nor, with your speeches, since I disagree

Therewith, will I make answer unto him.”

At this point there appears an interim

In the narration, to describe the three

That Elihu reproves, — though young is he.

And evidence appears with clearer look
That he — the speaker — wrote of Job, the book.
For, here digressing, he makes special note
Of the amazement that the three friends smote.
After the prologue, it appears, he paused :
Gave opportunity, if he had caused
Desire in them to alter, or explain ;
To contradict, retract, or, to again
Rehearse their views. “But they answered no
more,
They left off speaking : silent as before,
They spake not, but stood still : nor answered
they.
“I said, I also, answer will, my part :
And my opinion show.”

With head and heart
Attuned, directly he proceeds, to tell
How, while they spake, ideas in him did swell ;
How hard it was their utterance to suppress.
That now, the spirit him constrains, to express
What then had well-nigh burst the bounds of
flesh.

That he will, gladly, giving vent, refresh
Himself by speaking what he has in mind, —
To neither party partially inclined : —

Not flattering, nor with undue reverence,
 Accepting one, at other one's expense.
 Nor one, nor other party will he fear ;
 But, as in fear of God, make truth appear
 As he beholds it.

Then, the prologue ends,
 And he, at first, himself to Job commends :
 From the uprightness of his heart, he claims
 To speak ; — Best basis, this, for earnest aims.

He recognizes first, his origin
 Direct from God : — His Spirit's, breathing-in :
 His life was in God's breath. Since Job desired
 A daysman, like himself, in flesh attired,
 He, as from God, would come at Job's command :
 Bids Job to answer ; calls on him to stand
 And set in order what he has to say.
 Claims he's Job's wish : like Job, is made of
 clay.

Job had desired that he might God address
 As he would man, with freedom none the less.
 Now Elihu proposed to take the place,
 And all the arguments of Job to face :
 For he, to God, in spirit was allied.
 Job might approach him, all unterrified,
 Since he, like him was also formed of clay,

Nor would a heavy hand upon him lay.
Then Elihu rehearsed what Job had said ;—
As best appears, when, in the text it's read :—
Wherefore Job had complained that, as His foe,
God held him, searching ill of him to know.
Now Elihu claimed, herein, Job was not right :
God had His reasons, though not plain to sight :
Not of His matters He, to any man
Doth give account, nor open out His plan.
Why, he enquires, against God doth Job strive ?
Thus losing knowledge that he might derive.
He speaks of dreams ;— God's method, in that
day,
Of making known what He to man would say.
As he proceeds, his words appear to imply,
Job may have wrought, in time that has gone by,
Not error merely, but some sinful deed,
From which, his sufferings do, of course, proceed.
Of which, will he but make acknowledgment,
His soul shall be redeemed from banishment.
This intimation, Job can scarce withstand ;
He moves to speak, but Elihu waves his hand.
“ Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me,
Hold thou thy peace, and I will speak.”

Here he

Relents, and bids Job, has he anything
To say, to answer: speak. He would not bring
Harsh charge 'gainst Job: he'd rather justify.
He paused awhile, that Job might give reply.
Job bore in silence. Perfect self-control
He held: — patient possession of his soul.
While Elihu paused, deep sympathies awoke
In him for Job: nor Job the silence broke.
Then Elihu said (since Job refrained from
speech),
If thou speak not, then thee, I'll wisdom teach.
Whether, or not, he thought to make amends,
From Job he turned, and addressed Job's three
friends.
“Hear ye my words, O wise men, and give ear
Ye that have knowledge. For the words we hear,
Trieth the ear, as the mouth tasteth meat;
And it decides upon a mental treat.”
Earnest attention he would fain awake,
Because their knowledge and experience, make
Them qualified to sanction and declare
If his deductions are not right and fair.
The object prime, being for themselves to judge
Job, by the speech in which he did indulge,—
His sad condition taken into account,—

That to true good their knowledge might amount.
Job had grown less, in Elihu's esteem,
As a wise teacher, could no longer seem.
Now he rehearsed what cited oft has been,—
Job's firm belief that punishment for sin
Was not his due ; and, that God was severe.
He asked, " Did ever man like Job appear ? "
" Try to convict, and bring him to confess ;
The next you know, your speech is emptiness.
Sick as he is, he takes up your replies,
As draught of water, thirsty man supplies.
He ranks with wicked men, who walk abroad,
Because he says, a man, by serving God,
Receives no profit. Therefore, hear to me,
Ye men of understanding. Let it be
Far from God that He should do wickedly ;
The Almighty to commit iniquity !
What man shall earn, that He to him will pay ;
Each man shall find, according to his way.
Yea, surely, wickedly God will not do."

With how much pity must the Most-High view
These erring men, who labor to explain
Truth, that to them one day shall be made plain.
Yet pity they need less, who, reasoning, err ;
Than those who ask not, of God's character.

Now Elihu is grieved, that Job should be
Bereft, and compassed by infirmity,
Yet say that God has not in justice dealt ;
That not his sins have caused the woe he's felt.
That he should bear such punishment, yet cry
If guilt he should admit, his lips would lie !
In substance, Elihu says, " Who ever knew
A man down sick, and suffering through and
through,
Bereft of children, servants,— all, true friends,—
And all his property ; which comprehends
His substance all ; yet still persist to say
He has not deviated from the way
Of rectitude ? — nor even will allow
That God is dealing justly with him now !"
Hence, he desires Job's trial may proceed
Till Job, and wicked men, in very deed
May have no answer, to those who declare,
" God's way with Job is just, and right, and
fair."

He claims that Job, rebellion adds to sin :
That multiplied too oft, his words have been.
As advocate for Job, Elihu began.
Were he in Job's place, would he know his man ?
But Job had now attained the highest power ;

Summit and dome of the triumphant hour.
 Suffering no less, but having learned to ride
 Upon oppression's overwhelming tide ; —
 Like to a skiff upon a surging wave,
 Was he buoyed up : and those who strove to
 save —

Like his three friends, and the young Elihu,
 Were like the surge, felt, but beneath him, too.
 Accused without, but unaccused within,
 Job waited, uncomplaining ; while of sin,
 Renewedly, his would-be-daysman, stands,
 And charges Job, because he's in God's hands : —
 In the arena, it not being known
 Satan has made attack upon God's throne ;
 Having this world the field for his display,
 To show his principles ; — his chosen way :
 And this first thesis would as base secure ;
None will serve God, unless the pay is sure.

Now God proves Satan false, his words a lie ;
 By means which, Satan chose to justify
 His words and deeds. Heaven sees, in suffering
 Job,

The man distinguished most upon earth's globe !
 Who, to the universe, makes God's word sure,
 For which, he, to the end, must needs endure.

Job knew that Elihu argued, to defend
Almighty God: and, only for this end
Bore down on him. No less did Job desire
Concerning God: yet must, His cause enquire.
The old told creed, was quite worn out with him,
That suffering was indicative of sin.
The case he saw in a far different light,
Which put the once-held theory to flight.
While to put suffering on a virtuous one,
Placed virtue at a discount: put upon
Vice a premium! Thus it seemed to be.
And this, to him, was unsolved mystery.
But, finding what bewilderment was brought
By his denial; what excitement wrought;
And what confusion, agitation, fear,—
Which may toward doubt in God Himself,
 verge near;—
He, having shown how things appear to him,
Though thoughts well up, and answers reach the
 brim,
Dare not relieve himself by farther vent,
But holds within, his thoughts inclosed, all pent.
The while, pent up, his speculations bring
A series of connected wondering:
Such as, does God precisely know or care

To note each small event — minute affair ?
Every and all, so that, on all the earth,
Naught that transpires, to Him is nothing
worth ?

And, if He knows and cares for each and all,
Can He design, and everything forestall,
So that frustration never, nor surprise
Shall thwart his plans ? Whether God were
all-wise.

And, if all-knowledge, and all-wisdom, were
Inherent qualities of character, —
He, needing not experiment, to know ;
Nor, testing man, of man could wiser grow, —
Were he potential in ability,
And matchless power, held, in authority ?
Or, was there not an unseen hostile foe,
Invisible to man, and working woe ;
Which power God *would*, but *could not*, circum-
scribe ;

Could not control, would not descend to bribe ?
Perchance, he reasoned, either God don't know
Of my uprightness, and appalling woe ;
Or, knowing, does not heed my cry and case ;
Or, some malicious foe dares to efface
His plans and purpose ; whom God can't control ;

Or, God does *choose*, to afflict a righteous soul.
The last of which, to think, was to deny ;
Judged by himself, who would not willingly
Evil for good administer. This left
Conclusion that God is of one bereft ;—
Knowledge or power. Thus, to himself, explain
His great calamities, and trying pain.
Early, these great calamities Job found,
Serene in mind, with fortitude profound.
He, with majestic patience, calmly bore
All, till his friends accused him, o'er and o'er,
Of bringing on himself his misery.
This, truth required, that he at once deny.
During which contest he, sometimes, was drawn
Into the utterance of what, upon
Reflection he, reviewing, disapproved ;—
Though not by wickedness to speaking moved.
While any effort, now to explain, might tend
To lead them farther to misapprehend.
But Elihu, who had deeply been impressed,
Seeing that Job did not make manifest
A disposition to retract, perceived
That he must argue what himself believed.
He feels a pity for Job's deep distress,
And thinks it cannot possibly be less

While Job continues his defensive ground ;
 Therefore resolves a problem, to propound,
 Answer to which, the friends shall comprehend,
 As right and just, and thus the matter end.
 "Look to the heavens," he said. Doubtless up-
 rolled

Incipient tempest. "There the clouds behold,
 Higher than thou ; but how much higher He
 'Gainst whom thou sinnest ! Yet, although by
 thee

Be multiplied transgression, what the less
 Has He ? or, more, if thou work righteousness ?
 Thy wickedness may hurt a man like thee,
 Thy righteousness, to him, may profit be.
 But what to God ?

 No doubt Job gave due heed,
 Answering, in mind, as Elihu did proceed.
 Interrogating too, — only in mind, —
 To silence, wisely, being still inclined.
 And Job, no doubt, his answer did define
 More clear than Elihu's question did outline.
 "Against Him what do I, if I do sin,
 Or give to Him, if righteousness, I win ?"
 Thus Job replies, "If right, I give Him joy
 Of me approving : — I, in His employ.

And the delight of seeing that His thought
Is followed out and to perfection brought :
That in myself His ideal — His design,
Is realized. He, therefore, with benign
Complacence, may behold the work of His own
hands,

Meeting the standard He, of right, demands ;
'Tis this, if righteous, I to Him do give,
From whom alone derives the life I live.
His bliss that's absolute, no more can I
Affect ; than mote, the sun that shines on high.
Yet, shines the sun on a translucent gem,
The rays, reflecting, carry back in them
A radiance, that were never known and seen,
Did only opaque object meet the beam.
And is it naught to God, if this I give,
Himself reflected, who, in me, doth live ?
Or, if I sin against Him, then I give
So much the less, than did I rightly live :
I should ignore, the debt to Him I owe
For life, and all the joys that from it flow :
Give Him the pain displeasure must needs bring,
The lack of joy, He'd have, in witnessing
My life, if spent in a true, righteous way ;
All I should owe, yet fail my debt to pay."

Some such reply, in Job's mind must have
wrought,
While he, in silence, busy was with thought.
But, since he chose his silence to maintain,
Elihu, with hope to make the matter plain,
Continued. All enthusiastic, he,
That God appear from all injustice free.
But his endeavors move not Job to speech,
And none confess that his words wisdom teach.
More tender he, of Job, than Job's three friends;
And Job, against hypocrisy, defends.
Yet error blends with truth, while he would fain
Recover Job, and God as right maintain.
Digression now, in Elihu's mind, is wrought.
Minute affairs, he notes, are in God's thought!
The misty water-drops he maketh fall,
The dropping clouds, distil, abundant all.
"Can any understand the spreading cloud,
His tabernacle's noise, that soundeth loud?"
A storm approaching, all his thought employs,
The dashing rain, the thunder's fearful noise,
The flood-like streams, descending to the sea,
Like sea-roots, seem, rooted in sky to be.
He comments on the effect such storms produce.
The increasing storm makes language hard to
use.

Black clouds and dense, rush wild with mighty
 roar,

Whirring, with vapor mixed; awe-struck, before
Which, men and cattle, mute, aghast with fear,
Alike are silent: and, now still more drear;
The vivid light departs. The sombre clouds,
The day, have wrapped and draped in gloom and
 shrouds.

The rattling thunder, peal repeats on peal,
Quick, on the lightning serpentine to steal
With sudden burst, and prolonged echoing tone,
Blending with whistling wind's incessant moan.
Awhile all mute remain: then Elihu
Owns to heart-trembling. Agitation too
Betrays itself, as speaking, he proceeds,
But he takes note that Job the storm scarce
 heeds.

Observes him pacing slow, with thought intent,
As, ere the storm, he had the slow hours spent.
He bids him hear attentively the sound, —
Nor is Job listless to the peal profound: —
That God directs it, and the lightning too,
Elihu states. Nor Job takes other view;
But silent is, and, still not satisfied.
Elihu dwells on the storm, — still terrified;

The lightning's flash, the thunder, wakening fear,
Exciting awe, suggesting very near
A Majesty Divine. He talks of rain,
The whirlwind, snow, cold, frost, clouds; and,
again

Quiet restored, by warm south wind, so bland.
"Hearken, O Job," he begs, and bids him stand:
"Stand still and see the wondrous works of
God."

He cannot concentrate his thoughts. Abroad
They range, to Him who works; and, swift, de-
scend;

Awhile upon material forces bend
Without arrangement; wandering, as the storm
Itself attracts by ever-varying form.

He notes the working of the elements;
Quick turns to the Disposer of events.

"Did He at first arrange the electric course?
Ordain the execution of its force?

Does every lightning's stroke, His programme
meet;

Perform, what will His first design complete?
Or, did He leave some things in a loose way,
To mete them out as they occur each day?
Ordained He all life from the very first,—

Had each in mind ?”

If Elihu thus rehearsed
What must have been, he must have seen, the
worst

That could each one befall, God must have
known ;

And made arrangement for all who would own
His guidance ; and, for those who would deflect.

Not else, could He, His system first perfect.

Elihu asks Job, how the clouds, balanced are ;

But feels the answer is from Job afar,

Unless he with the Maker were, on high,

When, as a mirror, He spread out the sky.

Now feels he his own inability :

A shadowy darkness veils him mentally.

Asks what to say !

The ready volunteer

To stand for God, is hushed with trembling fear.

He'll champion stand for God who rules on high,

But if, in majesty, he feels Him nigh,

Lest he be swallowed up, he dares not speak.

And now, than Job, he finds himself more weak.

Confesses humbly, “The Almighty, we

Cannot find out. Most excellent is He.

In power, in judgment, He is plenty too.”

Abruptly; closes thus, brave Elihu!
Silent, with Job, he waits in wondering fear,
Nor knows the voice of God, he soon shall hear.
Just reached, the point, where wisdom doth begin;
Fear opes the gate to let more wisdom in.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TRUTH TRIUMPHANT.

SUBLIMELY silent now, awe-hushed, and still
Were all ; while led by mind, or heart, or will,
To self-communion ; or, to that more high,
Led by the unseen Spirit, ever nigh.
The lightning's flash, now dim and distant shone.
The thunder's peal, majestic still in tone,
Was tardy in responding to the gleam
Electric. Muttering, without pause, its theme,
In one continuous, ponderous, sounding roar.
The clouds break white, and luminous, and o'er
All nature, shed a clear, pellucid light,
Foretelling power to banish darkest night.
The mighty whirlwind dissipates the cloud.
A voice, distinct, deep-toned, and clear and loud
And unmistakable, is heard abroad.
Give ear : it is the answer of the Lord !
He speaks. Let earth and all its voices hush :
The pallid clouds their roarings cease, and blush.
He answered Job. When silent were all men,

And waiting all ;— it was the Lord's time then.
 No students are in better readiness
 Solution to receive, than who confess
 To solve the problem they have vainly tried,
 And with themselves can not be satisfied.
 He who has sought, found not, but sought in vain,
 Will glad receive truth's light, and best retain :
 Will willing be, as shall God's people all,—
 In God's day of great power, when truth shall fall,
 And lodgment find :— gladly go forth to meet
 Dew-decked and beautiful, His truth to greet.
 God's plots are perfect. Who'll presume to say
 Which means, which end ; which wait, and which
 withstay ?

Truth for those waiting, or they for the light ?
 God's adaptations are complete and right.
 Silently waiting, speaking none attempt ;
 Vanquished, but not by any argument :
 Then spake the Lord ; and it is strangely true,
 His reasoning takes the track of Elihu.
 "Who, this that darkeneth counsel ?" He in-
 quired,
 "By words that knowledge lack ?" (In Elihu,
 inspired ;
 As is all language, and all thought, that's true,

God's inspiration, brought to human view).
Nowise intimidated does Job seem.
Anticipating, he may be, a gleam
Of light: may think that God has heard his
prayer,

And now, will manifest His presence, where
He may be found. And why He does contend
Will now explain, and own Job is His friend.

Scripture hints not that Job felt slightest fear
When the Lord's voice he heard pronouncing
near.

Like Adam, conscience-stricken, he was not;
Had naught to hide: God's voice was what he
sought.

The Lord accused; but not of crime, or guilt:
Simply, his counsel was unwisely built.
For lack of knowledge, he did, reasoning, err;
Lacking true theses; falsely did infer.
Hence, Job it was, who counsel had obscured,
By words that knowledge never had assured.
So Elihu complained, in time gone by,
"Words, without knowledge, Job doth mul-
tiply."
Not that God's perfect wisdom, he'd attained,
When he, of Job and his three friends, com-
plained.

But it appears, that when a man arrives
 At truth's concretest form, the harmonies
 Between his own and God's mind, do compare,
 And, in due time, God will the fact declare.

The Lord continues. Job, attent, gives ear.
 Does He bid Job, "Bow down:" or, to appear
 In reverential posture? No: but "Gird
 Up now thy loins like a man." Not a word
 Implying cringing. 'Tis the Lord's delight
 That man in mind and heart should be upright:
 Nor calls for other attitude: yet all,
 Being Spirit-prompted, may, before Him, fall.
 For posture should derive from deep within,
 Or, tainted with hypocrisy, 'tis sin.
 Job, in his suffering and distress, had prayed,
 "Withdraw Thy hand, and make me not afraid,
 By dread. Then call, and I will answer thee.
 Or, let me speak, and then Thou answer me."
 He felt, what charge against him might be
 brought,
 That he could answer as the righteous ought:
 Or, if the judge preferred to interrogate,
 Give fair reply to questions He might state.
 Jehovah now accedes. He will demand;
 And Job in place of answerer shall stand.

Job probably expects question direct

On some specific subject, to effect

An explanation of his suffering.

Instead of which, this leads the questioning : —

Heard through the whirlwind, coming from the
cloud,

Majestic, thought-inciting, low and loud ; —

“ When the foundations of the earth I laid,

Where wert thou ? ” Hushed, Job listens, un-
afraid.

“ Declare if thou hast understanding.” Now

Job has a theme ; and he may stand, or bow :

Suit his position to his frame of mind.

The Lord can wait till Job can answer find.

While Job has pause, we will consider, too,

The starting-point God calls attention to.

Solve we the problem of man’s destiny,

Man’s origin, the first necessity.

This, the foundation is, the starting-point ;

Base this aright, and logic finds true joint.

With Job, this is a subject new, for thought :

Theme unconsidered, full of interest fraught.

The Mightiest hurries not. Job thinks, to know.

The mills of God grind fine, but very slow :

Amplly He time supplies ; and patient, waits.

God's thought strikes light: thus helped, Job meditates.

Had God's inquiry, by some *man*, been brought,
It would have been dismissed with little thought.
Job might have said, "I nowhere was, of course."
And thought the question had but little force.
He'd volunteered to give to God, reply ;
Nor, the first question, might pass lightly by.
Asked by the Maker of the universe,
Job must elaborate, or brief, rehearse.
Reflecting thereupon, he must have thought,
"Where *was* I? Somewhere? anywhere? or,
not ?

I could not have existed. For my mind
Can, in that past, no recollection find.
Yet, notwithstanding, might my mind have birth
Before were laid foundations of the earth :
Since surely, I had life, one year — or more,
Before my memory treasured any store.
And who can live a year, nor recognize
That life ; may, also, ere the earth did rise
From its foundation, have existed. Then
The lack of memory, argues not that men
Had not existence ere the earth began,—
They, comprehended, in God's wondrous plan,

When the type-system of the earth He drew,—
 Redemption, the event He had in view.
 Memory may be dispensed with then, to show,
 What, for some cause, 'tis best to *learn* to know.”
 Job might have reasoned farther, had he known
 The purpose he was answering near God's throne ;
 The system of God's universe, what did
 Comprise. But which, from him, must needs be
 hid.

Job, reasoning thus respecting memory,
 Proceeds. “ Not only *might*, my being, be ;
 I even *must*, of a necessity
 Have then existed : or, objectively
 Endued with conscious power to will, to be ;
 To think and know, experience sentiently ;
 Or, as subjective, in God's thought, prehend ;
 To whom, existence conscious, he would lend,
 When, in the fit time, in my orbit, He
 Should set me forth ; — as from eternity
 He had ordained, who, as a whole, doth view
 And, all things, comprehend. To whom, nor new
 Nor old is ; but one grand and vast sublime.
 And this mosaic, now being wrought in time,
 Foreseen, foreknown, foreplanned, and foreor-
 dained,

Ere first objective atom self attained.”

Naught has transpired, since time began to
 be,
 That God did not, from all eternity,
 Foreknow as certain in time to take place :
 And fix for each event a time and space ;
 So that the evil to be wrought, should be —
 (The evil, sure, not a necessity
 Upon His system ; but as sure to rise,
 As free-born agents, birthright, might despise.)
 Assigned its place, — arranged its destiny ; —
 As on the organ’s key-board, is each key,
 Which sends, responsive to the touch, its sound ;
 There, in its own place, always to be found.
 And every discord which, untuned, would break
 The harmony ; complete the chord shall make ;
 And so produce, combined, a minor strain,
 To swell the major chorus, when again
 Loud hallelujahs shall, from all arise,
 Who fill the many mansions of the skies.
 Did discord know itself, it pain must be
 To dwell forever in discordant key :
 But blending with the whole, there worketh
 praise

To Him who glorious harmony can raise .
 The wrath of man, and discords, make to chime
 With richest music in the realm sublime.

Job, in his musing whether he had birth
 Before were laid foundations of the earth ;
 Whether he were, as individual,
 Then conscious self, and free to stand or fall ;
 Whether a spirit-life he then did know,
 Or slept in mind of God, in embryo ; —
 “ I may have had a past,” he might have thought,
 “ And in that past, perchance, the answer sought,
 To the deep problem, may indeed be found,
 Which oft, my sons discussed, with reasoning
 sound :

Which made me stand in fear and profound awe,
 Lest some conclusion, that they must needs
 draw —

Reasoning from seen to unseen, — might bring
 down

Some visitation of their Maker's frown.
 If there, I had free choice, and did refuse,
 The life ordained for me, myself to choose ;
 If there, as here, refused I to submit
 Till I knew better why, than God saw fit
 In wisdom to reveal ; then it may be

A new probation he has granted me :
 Nor for rebellion would annihilate,
 But built the earth, in a symbolic state,
 With things that perish ; so to typify
 The higher life, that was not meant to die :
 Sin's wages show ; and, by antithesis,
 The way of life, peace, glory, joy, — true bliss.
 A new minority has granted man
 To practise free powers, by a mundane plan.
 And, by experience, here on earth attain —
 Arriving home, in heaven, — a higher plane
 'Tis possible 'tis so. Man, like a tree
 Cut down, may live again, live consciously."

Job may have reasoned thus, until he drew
 As of life past, an almost confirmed view
 Of life to come ; which, shadowy though, and
 dim,

Was consolation, and a hope to him.
 And, tracing on, reasoned, without a doubt,
 That even he, himself, was not left out
 In the computing of the wondrous whole : —
 That there was worth, in every human soul,
 Ensuring him, ere founding of the earth,
 A time and place : and then, ordained his birth.
 What time his life upon earth should begin

On conscious plane, when he might lose or win
 Eternal life : if he hear not, or heed
 The monitor within : — “ Let not self lead
 To selfishness : for life they do but lose,
 Who seek to save it, selfishly to use.”

Even so early, in earth's peopling, may
 Some gleam of light, have heralded truth's day.

Divinely questioned, Job, we still behold.
 Sublimely calm God's thoughts, in words unfold.
 Above his ills Job rises high, to find
 Not bread alone sustains. Man lives in mind.
 Led by Divine inquiry, Job was taught, —
 So guided, was to full assurance brought, —
 That the whole earth, and every event
 Transpired, or to transpire ; each incident,
 Each so-called accident ; with each and all
 Comprising God's creation, great and small,
 Were all embraced by the unerring Mind :
 Computed, balanced, as it were, to find
 What, of creation, would be the expense ;
 What must needs be, with what he might dispense
 Of things unseen, in types of things on earth,
 Yet true ideal they, who should have birth
 Thereon, might well conceive: till they should know
 Eye hath not seen, nor ear had heard, nor glow
 Entered the heart, of joys to be bestowed,

When the five gates no longer hold the road : —
 When, flesh dissolved, new avenues, shall find
 To high delights, the ever-opening mind.
 So God adapted all material things,
 And to the mind of Job this knowledge brings ;
 That he did not employ machinery
 Not knowing what result would surely be ;
 Nor leave earth to chance-fate as engineer,
 On seasons great, himself, but to appear.
 But that the All-wise Architect-Divine,
 In His conception, plan, scheme and design,
 Exceeded, in His knowledge accurate,
 Human artificer's best estimate, —
 Who would for all emergencies provide,
 And, first of all, wisely, the cost decide ; —
 As infinite, does finiteness, exceed
 In thought, conception, word, design and deed.

Earth has foundations : held as sockets sink.
 "Who laid the measures ?" Job is called to
 think.

Whereupon, stand its firm foundations fast,
 The corner stone, who laid, in ages past ?
 Who, impulse gave, revolving nebula,
 When inspiration sped from star to star ?
And all the morning stars together sang,

And sons of God, for joy, the chorus rang.

(Which proves God's choice, — his first, thus
best, design,

Was sentient being in celestial line.)

The sons of God are first brought forth, to see
Creation's work and love the harmony.

These, with their Maker, sympathy maintained ;
Enjoyed the life divine for them ordained.

Not on this earth was spirit-life begun ;

From dust developed, first earth's race to run —

Here germinate, — then be transplanted where
Are better soil for growth, and better air.

God does not need to experiment, to find
The wisest way to waken conscious mind.

Knowing the best, He took His first, best way ;
But made provision for the long delay

Which fall of angels, and the sin of man,

Would intervene, between His perfect plan

And the purged system ; which, restored should
be

Increased, and lasting, as eternity.

The Lord, discoursing, plainly shows to Job,
That there's no power upon this earthly globe,
However mighty, beyond His control ;
And that His knowledge comprehends the whole.

Asks Job, "when earth, cloud, as a garment,
wore" —

Ere human type had looked its wonders o'er —
"Whose wisdom, caused a barrier to be found,
To keep the sea within its mete and bound?"
Not chance it was. An agent, then shut up
The sea, secure, in earth's vast hollow cup.
Who said, "Come hither, and no farther go,
Thy proud waves here be stayed." This, doth
Job know?

Which, doubtless, Job to allegory leads.
The lesson, as he understands it, reads,
If Job knew not the weight and balancing
Of the material system, nor could bring
Distinct decision, — what upholds the earth,
Which had foundation ere himself had birth;
How could he feel assured he knew the ground
Of government Divine? — its mete and bound?
The regulated measures it should deal;
Nor, might it, liabilities conceal,
Causing requirements, by himself, unknown --
Views from the arena, than views from the throne,
Being discrepant, circumscribed, because
The shades of earth conceal, for highest cause,
The government of God: His sovereign laws?

And thus on faith, since lacking sight, Job draws :
 Learning, on Him confidingly, to lean,
 Whose loving-kindness is unequalled seen
 In that benevolence, the which awards
 The title *PERFECT to him who accords*
In moral principle with the Divine :
 Nor mine secures at the expense of thine : —
 Who, life devotes, with an unselfish end ;
 Bearing good will to all, to all a friend.
 When motive leads thus — earnest, honestly ;
 Kindly compassionate, as Judge, is He.

Concerning what transpired before his day,
 Job, hitherto, was called his thoughts to stay :
 Was, by such subjects, rationally led
 To such conclusions, as his mind well fed.
 Now his attention is still onward drawn
 To things and matters since himself was born.
 Had he commanded morning, since his day ?
 The dayspring regulated ? made the way
 So plain, the sun might know just where to rise,
 The day to mark from night, below the skies —
 With the attending influence, that would shake
 The wicked from the course they dare to take
 When darkness covers them ? — though they,
 within,

Feel constant turmoil ; — need to hide their sin.
If on God's governmental dealings, Job
Would shed a light to radiate earth's globe ;
By his own wisdom let him first essay
To show he understands the spring of day : —
Day natural can show, direct the light,
Control its course, and, by it shake off night.
These can he not control and regulate,
He may not higher light elucidate.
It shines, though it, to him, obscured may be :
Lacking that light, he, therefore, is not free
On his mysterious suffering to decide.
The clouds and darkness that o'er him abide,
May be the point where truth's clear light shall
spring.

Job does not know the power of suffering : —
That there, in moral principle, is power, —
When man is led, by it, in trying hour,
And through it led, firm and unfaltering
To do aright ; endure what foes may fling ;
And erring friends, and hades may oppose, —
To work with God, and help subdue His foes.

God's lesson-book, creation, is for use ;
He shows the method that Himself doth choose.
There's naught that might not illustrate. The
springs,

That to the mighty sea, its water, brings ;
 Had Job considered ? If so, he might know
 Himself was tributary to the flow
 Of the great mass of thinking, sentient mind
 Toward God, the source ; as natural spring,
 would find
 Its source, the sea. Its depths, if unattained,
 Knowledge, by searching, comes ; thus, wisdom
 gained.

With life the ocean teems, in every drop ;
 No life, of which, within itself doth stop.
 Related each, to every other, life.
 Stagnates but one, becomes stagnation rife.
 All is not pure, with one impurity.

Job's mind was clear, presented truth, to see.
 Knowledge and wisdom, in the mind of God,
 Perceived he infinite ; as now abroad
 By God directed, he, the subject viewed.
 He never doubted God was great, and good.
 Job, by suggestion taught, is brought to see,
 From surface to the deepest depth of sea,
 All that's included—all with life that's fraught,—
 Each object is, of the Creative-thought.
 Minutest particle of water-drop,
 By heat expanded, till expansion stop

In the perceptible : water condensed —
Solidified to ice by cold intense —
Divine conception is ; emblem, to show
Some higher truth, God meant for man to know.
Not alway would he live ; Job once had said.
The dead, he thought, to their own selves were
dead.

A problem, now awaking deepest thought,
The same Inquirer, to Job's mind has brought.
“The gates of death ; have they been ope'd to
thee ?

Death's shadowy doors, has it been thine, to see ?”
Now doth the mind of suffering Job, expand.
Death's doors ? death's gates ! does death, as
usher, stand

And open doors and gates to other land ?
A portal, death ? opening a future, where
The righteous may live on, forever, there ?
Shall dying man, not simply live again,
But conscious live, to pain not subject, then ;
Part with the perishing ; but mind, and soul,
Affections and emotions ; — what makes whole
Power of enjoyment ; these, shall he retain,
In compass and intensity to gain ; —
Each power revived, identity renewed,

Life ne'er to end, while God, the mental food,
The normal craving of the soul, supplies? —
Himself, the food, for which the spirit sighs!

Job, waiting, suffering, in that early day,
Knew not, toward God, direct, his pathway lay.
Still, the sad path he now in darkness trod,
Was leading to the glorious light of God.
Who holds all knowledge in supreme command,—
Whose thoughts, by nature, blossom and expand;
Conceptions whose, by far, transcending all
Human ideals, that men, beauty, call;—
He condescends, discourse with Job, to hold
So kindly, that the thought does not unfold
Of condescension! Simply that he hears
God speak of that which in his range appears.
Job, thus instructed, promptly doth conclude
That God, in knowledge, is as great as good.
His felt experience, this did testify.
God, he had trust in, though He seemed not nigh;
Seemed cruel to him: he, in heart, could say
He would trust God although He, him should
slay.
So high, his heart attained, above his head,
And he, in spirit, was divinely fed.
Deep his affection: now, his intellect,

Divine discourse shall balance and perfect.
Job, earlier thought, to cope with the Most
 High;
That His attention passed small matters by;
Surprise now met him that he ever thought
God knew not all things; could by him, be
 taught!
Rehearsing how brute creatures are supplied,
God asks, if Job did, for their wants, provide.
Job takes the question home; feels, surely he
Could not direct; no power held, to decree.
He had not viewed creation with such scope;
A single thought, it took him time, to cope;
While God embraced all knowledge. Did he
 dare
His mite, with God's all-knowledge, to compare!
His wish had been, his enemy would write
A book, enrolling what he would indict
Against him: — let the charges be where he
Could read, and thus rehearse them readily.
But here was book, presented by no foe,
Divine Instructor, teaching Job to know!
Showing, how true, "Nature has God at heart;"
Hiding to teach: and, of himself, impart.
Job had desired discourse with God to gain,

If God would ask, he thought he could explain.
 Would God appear, and but the question state,
 He would reply, and would not hesitate.
 Not in his mind was such a train of thought.
 When he proposals made, and conference sought.
 But many questions God has now proposed,
 Nor, by an answer, has Job one disposed.
 He is approaching deep humility.
 The Lord proposes now, more pointedly.
 "He who contends" — reply Job must con-
 struct —
 "With the Almighty, shall he Him instruct ?
 He who reproveth God, let him reply."
 Job now an answer can nowise deny.
 That he had ever thought his case unseen,
 When naught 'twixt God and truth could inter-
 vene ;
 That, of himself, he had wished God to tell ; —
 Creation all, he now knew, God knew well.
 That he'd charged God with counting him His
 foe,
 When truth to God was clear, and he must know ;
 That he'd to God, of cruelty, complained ;
 Whose kindness, brute creation all, sustained : —
 Abundant thought to frank confession led.

With solemn candor, to the Lord, Job said
“Lo I am vile, what shall I answer Thee ?”
His hand upon his mouth he'd lay. And he,
Though once he'd spoken, yea, two charges
brought;
Would not proceed. By God he had been
taught,
That God knew all. He silent would remain ;
Nor would he question, though all was not plain.
Let it be noted, Job does not retract
What, of himself, he'd stated as a fact,
Relating to his character, before,
Or since, the pain and grief he bore.
But, having harbored thoughts, and uttered
speech
Concerning God, of things beyond his reach,
Implying that, in knowledge, God fell short ;
Against the which, God evidence had brought,
Proving that wisdom, and all knowledge lay
In Him : — all things beheld as open day : —
To have accused Him ! sick, though he, the
while,
Reduces self-esteem, till Job feels vile :
And, with his character, in true accord,
This, frankly, he confesses to the Lord.

The Lord well knew Job would to this be brought
As the result of what he would be taught
By His instruction: knew if mortal should
With him compare, though perfect he, he would,
The veil withdrawn, and His perfections known,
Feel vile; and freely his condition own.
Yet, had the Lord, to Job, this statement made,—
That, to himself he did himself degrade,
Misjudging God,—him, to consider less
Than infinite, in all those qualities
Which comprehend and make the righteous God,
Could Job have *felt* it, though in spirit awed?
Not God's assertion could conviction bring,
Hence God, All-wise, pursued the arguing:
Which answered just the end He had in view:
Just what, He knew the perfect man would do.
The Lord now answered out of the whirlwind.
Is there some statement that He will rescind
That Job's not perfect? Or, that he's not vile?
Will He give penance? Keèp him sick awhile,
Until the vileness, which he does confess,
Is purged and burned away? If penances
Are what God ordains,—such His system,—now
'Tis opportune to make the offender bow.
He answered. Did He say to Job, "Be crushed:

Yes, you are vile! Be silenced now, and hushed?"

No. God, unangered, makes to Job address,
Alluding not to what Job did confess.

"Gird up thy loins now like a man." So calm
The voice of God, Job feels His sheltering arm.
"I will demand, declare thou unto me."

Can Job withstand the sovereign Majesty?
He humbly had acknowledged, he was vile,
And silenced. But he could not reconcile
The judgments God had sent on him, as quite
Consistent if God knew, and held all might.

Were He all-powerful, as He was, all-wise,
Why visit him with such dire miseries?

That God *knew* all, Job now was satisfied.

Could he accomplish, he must yet decide.

Job saw himself superior to the brute,

Yet, held the brute power he could not dispute
Or rival; neither could restrain, nor bind.

Hence, argued Job, might not heaven's Sovereign
find

Some foe, or force, that ranged all unrestrained,—
Not by God's will,—who sometimes victory
gained?

Job had conceived so; hence his words and
grief:

And God's discourse, had not changed his belief.
His righteousness, Job held, by right, should
save

Him from calamities, and early grave.

The Lord resumes : asks Job will he condemn
The Lord to his accusers, that to them
Himself may righteous be ? Then, by discourse,
And questions close, brings home the truth with
force.

Could not Job argue for himself, and see
Who infinite in knowledge was, must be
Supreme in power, Almighty to decree ?
That though he suffered, yet God had done right ;
And he must walk by faith, when failed him
sight ?

Job had seemed to claim peerage with the Lord.
The Lord accused him not, nor marked it fraud ;
But, by comparing qualities that may
Be mentally discerned, prepares the way
By which Job may behold, as analyzed,
The claim himself had fully recognized.
Had Job an arm like God's ? Could he sustain
Material things on vast harmonious plane ?
Hold up the earth ? The constellations keep
In their own orbits, through the heavenly deep ?

Could he emotions raise, sublimely high,
By mighty thunders sounding through the sky?
Could he irradiate, with beauty's glow,
All nature? on himself the same bestow?
Ordain, precisely, that which should befall, —
Which justly, upon ill-desert, must fall?
Could he abase, and individualize
The proud? till each, position, occupies
That's right, and relative? till each decide
The dust his place, — all, there, their faces hide?
Could Job thus do? Then would the Lord
confess

Job's own right hand himself could save and
bless.

That Job had power, the Lord would recognize,
A governmental system to devise,
That would, the righteous, quite exempt from
pain.

His own right hand might such a code ordain.
But, otherwise, did he with matter find
A limitation to his power to bind,
He must confess superiority
Existing far beyond his own degree.
And if he could not on material plane
Cope with the brute, equality maintain,

Could he in intellectual quality
Claim peerage with the One who rules on high ?
Could he, with calm assurance boldly stand,
On equal terms to reason make demand ?
Could Job conclude that there might not obtain
A greater lack on immaterial plane
Which should deter him, and at once preclude
Him from deciding adverse,—less than good,
Omnipotent, or righteous, just or wise,
The Sovereign Ruler of the earth and skies ?
Attention undivided, Job had given,
Instruction taking, as, 'twere food, from heaven.
Hungering and thirsting, he, for righteousness,
Received provision, felt God's power to bless.
Job answered, then, the Lord. He is assured,
Perceives the truth, and, in it, rests secured.
"I know Thou canst do everything." No doubt
Remains of power. No thought, from Him, left
out.

Doubt, he had held, unuttered, God resolved :
And now, no doubt remains ; although involved
Matters and subjects he can not explain,
Quiescent grown, he wills not to complain.
He now has risen to a height sublime,
His vision ranges high : the things of time

Diminish, while he rises to behold
From point Divine, views gradually unfold.
From this high point, the subject-object, he,
Himself sees, as he would another see.
Compares his views,—how changed since days
gone by !

Beholds himself, as the All-seeing-eye
Had then beheld him, when the question came,
“Who darkeneth counsel ?” Now He asks the
same.

“Indeed, who is this that thus counsel hides,
Ere knowledge comes, and he by it abides !
Therefore I uttered ; nor have understood
The import of my words, correctly viewed.
Too wonderful for me ! I thought I knew
Things, I now see, were hidden from my view.”
Job now puts forth earnest, beseeching prayer,
That God Himself, still farther, will declare.
He knows he need not utter spoken word,
His mind is seen, his every thought is heard.
Not sin, nor guilt, does Job confess, or feel.
He had misunderstood. He had to deal
With his accusers, and he said, what then
Seemed true to him, replying to those men.
Now, he’s assured, his suffering in the past,

God had good reason for : convinced at last.
 Believes, God's knowledge, equal to His skill ;
 Power, to His knowledge, just and right His
 will :

God, balanced in all attributes sublime,
 Ruling supreme, by right, throughout all time.
 All former knowledge, as a hearsay seems ;
 The present, eyesight. Job, self-searching, deems
 Himself most insignificant : surprised
 That he, had God severely criticised.
 So kind, so angerless was God ! so true .
 Patient in reasoning ; unaccusing, too ;
 The more accused Job felt himself, that he
 Should, toward the patient God, accuser be.
 Wherefore, himself, he with abhorring viewed ;
 In dust and ashes penitence renewed.

Now the three friends see Job reduced, to where
 They failed to place him, though with jealous care
 They strove to plunge him, hoping he would find
 Some guilt to own, by effort of their mind.
 They feel he's right at last. They will advance—
 But ere they've time congratulating glance
 To exchange, and to each other calmly tell
 They'd better go to Job and wish him well ;
 They hear, words of the Lord, to them addressed !

Thoughts turn from Job ; each, for himself, im-
pressed.

Who charged no crime on Job, prescribed no rite,
Thus spake to Eliphaz, the Temanite,—
To him, that thought God, as accuser, stands,
And charges folly on angelic bands : —

“My wrath is kindled against thee,” and then
Pronounced the same toward his two fellow-men.
“For,” said the Lord, “ye have not spoken right
As hath My servant Job.” Now their delight
Must have been clouded by a strange surprise.

They were, to God, than suffering Job, less wise !
Job, whom they'd bade acquaint himself with God,
More right than they, and yet beneath the rod !
Now, here was evidence held up to view,
That what God said at first, continued true.

God's word as truth, Satan's worst test had stood.
Job, perfect proved ; upright, evil eschewed.

For, be it noted, ne'er to be forgot,
God,—just, and right, and true,—against Job
brought

No other accusation, than the charge
Of ignorance ; — of reasoning at large
While unaware of principles. This gave
Shadow and darkness, without power to save

By hope, which, anchorage in truth, must find.
This now he learned direct from God's own mind.
While Job had been enduring for the Lord
Unconsciously, expecting no reward ;
By Satan tortured, put to cruel test,
His friends, unconscious, Satan served with zest.
The keenest weapons they, which he could find,
Since to apparent fact, they turn stone blind.
But truth has power, and, in its normal course
It will acquit, or else convict with force.

And now the Lord addresses Eliphaz
And his two friends ; who, as his servant has,
Have not so spoken what of Him is right.
Doubtless they see their error in God's light.
He bids them sacrifice, seek Job to pray
For them ; or He will deal in their own way
With them, according to their erring creed.

The pious men, direct, to Job proceed.
As priest, Job offered what they freely brought ;
In their behalf, to God, by prayer, he sought.
For them, he prayed, as God did them direct.—
Their evil speaking was their great defect.—
Job prayed : — an honest, earnest, hearty prayer.
Then, Satan, baffled was : no margin there
For profit to him. All, was lost, entire.

His expectations, with Job's prayer, expire.
Job would not curse, if, for such friends, he'd
pray!

Satan saw truth, ah, turned from it away.

When Job, in kindness, offered fervent prayer
For those who did by no means censure spare;—
No ill-will holding, thoroughly infused
With love like God's,— his spirit thus enthused;
As priest officiated;— it was then
Job the most perfect, stood, confirmed of men.
Then did the Lord turn Job's captivity.
Satan could get no hold, and Job was free.
The Lord blessed Job: not only did restore
His lost possessions, but repeated o'er. —
Gave twice as much as he had owned before.
Then came his brethren, and his sisters came;—
How oft repeated, since, has been the same!
What vain excuses relatives will find,
When adverse fortune makes their vision blind:—
The way is far. The nimble steed won't stand.
They must drive by, and come to level land.
But to Job's case. Came his acquaintance, who
Doubtless, the Lord had prompted, thus to do.
They'd been his friends before: again eat bread
With him. And, kindly, while his bounty fed,

They did bemoan him : and to comfort sought,
Concerning evil,—all the Lord had brought
Upon him. And, sincerity to show,
A piece of money did each man bestow.
And every one an ear-ring gave, of gold,
To bind his friendship with a stronger hold.

As type of the great Prototype, Job stood,
Who came to earth and did endure to blood,
To witness to the truth, make God's love known,
Defeat the tempter and destroy his throne.
With love in death, He prayed for those who slew,
“Father forgive, they know not what they do.”

Job had not sheltered been, and screened away,
Thus kept by God from falling finally.
He had been fully held in Satan's power ;
Who, all he could concoct from hour to hour,
To poison life, and comfort to destroy,
His intellect and malice did employ :
Nor curse, could wrench, from Job ; who could
not see
That God was dealing with him righteously.

All suffering that the arch-fiend could contrive,
All one, retaining reason, could survive,
Job had outridden ; — borne above the tide :
And thus to Satan's lie had testified.

To the celestial realm the fact was brought
That Satan, who had asked, "Serves Job for
naught?"

Was vanquished; since, there was one, he must
own,

Whose acts were based on principle alone.

The principle which rules in realms of light —
Unselfish love.

Job, pledged to truth and right,
His health regained, his friends, and honor, too;
The past receded, pressed by visions new.

So blessed the Lord the latter years of Job,

Who had enwrappt himself as with a robe,

With honor and integrity. The Lord

Blessed Job; delighting him more to award,

Than his beginning had by Him been blessed.

Increased his stock, till double he possessed, —

Of that which may by figures be explained,

Above the losses which he had sustained.

As many children as were smitten down;

Seven sons to bless and bitter memories drown;

Three daughters fair, and held in high esteem:

Seemed what they should be; were, what they
did seem.

Nor sees their father, in whom wisdom lies,

Ground for distinction in their sex to rise.
Daughters and sons alike have filial claim,
And he, bequeathing, dearly loves each name.
Gave, with their brethren, them inheritance, —
Saw equal rights, to be but common sense.
Thus Job was blessed, to stand on record; first
To have his life and character rehearsed.
Was spared, the truth, God had to him made
 known,
To tell to generations of his own :
To gain a glimpse of that blest realm on high,
From which celestial watchers hover nigh,
Of which his former life received no ray :
Nor, till he sacrificed in priestly way
For his three friends. To him were then re-
 vealed
Celestial visions; which before were sealed.
Assurance that existence would remain
When the material could no more retain
The mind in fetters. Then, incumbrance free,
'Twould soar, and live to all eternity ;
And dwell at home in Him from whom life came,
Who best is known by His revealed name ; —
“The LORD, the LORD GOD,” — feebly words
 portray

The God of love to whom his children pray.
"Gracious and merciful," he would be shown ;
And suffering long, to make His goodness known ;
In goodness and in truth abundant. And
For thousands mercy keeps ; though, they with-
stand,

And in iniquity, transgress and sin : —

His nature holds forgiveness deep within.

While he, by no means, will the guilty clear,
Connive at wrong, and make it right appear ;

He views, transmission, as a rule of right,
And holds it plainly to the parent's sight. —

As children, to their parents, likeness bear,
They shall their virtues, or, their vices, share.

Be ye, as I am, perfect, he requires,

And who perfection honestly desires, —

From loving impulse strives, aright to live ;

No malice holds, is ready to forgive ;

Like Job, is ready, as their priest, to pray

For those, who've crossed him in his heavenward
way ; —

On such the Father looks approving down,

And they shall wear, with Christ, the victor's
crown.

He would that all their parallel should find ; —

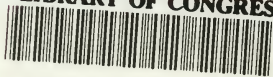
Their true relation to their Author's mind :
Not, without knowledge, rashly, peerage claim :
But, feeling kinship, own our Father's name.







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